

Hafa Adai!

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Saipan Tribune



More medical supplies arrive

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A charter flight from the U.S. mainland arrived last Tuesday, bringing with it more medical supplies for the Commonwealth Health Care Corp. The medical supplies, which

were shipped from Long Beach, California through the CTSI Logistics, arrived on April 20, to boost the CNMI's efforts against the spread of COVID-19 and the capacity of CHCC's laboratory.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres took to See MORE on Page 4

BOE deadlocks on loan for PSS employees' pay

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A 2-2 deadlock to approve a board resolution required by the Marianas Public Land Trust to process the Public School System's request for an over \$3-million loan

has further delayed PSS personnel salaries.

During a special board meeting yesterday, Board of Education chair Janice Tenorio and vice chair Herman Atalig voted no to the motion to approve the board resolution on the MPLT loan, while members Phillip

Mendiola-Long and Andrew Orsini voted yes. Board member Marylou Ada was not present to vote, resulting in the deadlock and the motion's failure.

The loan is needed to pay off the last three missed PSS personnel payrolls. MPLT, however, requires

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An Asia Pacific Airline charter flight that arrived with medical supplies from the U.S. mainland last Tuesday is unloaded at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. Here, a CTSI Logistics employee waits for the cargo to get loaded onto his truck to deliver the supplies to either the Commonwealth Health Center on Navy Hill or Kanoa Resort in Susupe.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

AT A GLANCE

As of 4pm, April 21, 2020**

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	136	0	136
Recovered	112	2	114
Deaths	6*	0	6*

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	14	0	14
Recovered	9	0	9
Negative	51	0	51
Deaths	2	0	2

*Total includes a sailor from the USS Theodore Roosevelt

**No new cases have been identified on both islands; Guam has two more recoveries.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

CPA gives tenants \$1.22M discount

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority board of directors unanimously approved waiving and giving discounts in the total amount of \$1.22 million in leases for six months to its tenants at CNMI airports and seaports that

have been severely impacted due to shutdown of operations as a result of COVID-19 pandemic.

CPA is waiving 100% of the April, May, and June leases for this year. July will be discounted 50%, August 40%, and September 30%.

For the airports' tenants, the total See CPA on Page 4

NMC graduation postponed

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College has decided to postpone its graduation ceremony due to the COVID-19 threat and the social distancing directive implemented by the CNMI



government. According to an email that NMC interim president Frankie Eliptico sent to all students, NMC's annual commencement ceremony, which was See NMC on Page 4

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BUSINESS
If you are craving for Korean chicken, Thunder Chicken on Middle Road is open.

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ASIA

New Zealand has set itself an ambitious goal: eliminating the coronavirus altogether.

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GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, more people are thinking about making a vegetable garden.

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Local

Minority bloc asks House Gaming chair to subpoena IPI

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives' minority bloc has asked House Gaming Committee chair Ralph Yumul (R-Saipan) to subpoena Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) to ask it about the community benefit fund that it is supposed to underwrite.

Finding no records of disbursements of the community benefit fund aside from the \$1.2

million that's been distributed to four programs, the minority has asked Yumul to consider issuing a subpoena to the sole casino license holder on Saipan.

Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan), in an interview, said that the records that they have gathered from an Open Government Act request to the Office of the Governor show that the Governor's Office can account for only about \$1.2 million in total for four different programs that received

these funds back in 2018, but that there is nothing else in the record to show any other distributions of funds. The minority formally submitted the documents they received through their OGA request to the House of Representatives at the session last Thursday.

Under the Casino License Agreement, IPI was required to contribute \$10 million to the community benefit fund in January 2018, \$10 million in June 2018, and another \$20

million in October 2019, and every year after that.

"We have no other records other than the disbursements of \$1.2 million," Sablan said. "What that means is that the Governor's Office cannot account for \$38.8 million, and we did verify with his legal counsel [that] these are all...they have. That was all he could say at that point. What we've asked the Gaming Committee chairman to consider doing is to issue a

subpoena to IPI to seek their records in terms of how these community benefit funds are actually being managed."

She further stated that the Gaming Committee, like any standing committee of the House, has powers to issue a subpoena to conduct oversight and legislative investigations, and that IPI, under the Casino Commission's regulations, is obligated to respond to legislative oversight requests.

"But the real bottom line question is, where's the money, and why hasn't the Governor's Office done very much

at all based on the record to enforce that obligation?" Sablan asked. "If there is some funding that really should be a public benefit, especially if it's something like \$38.8 million, you need to hold on to that promise, and ensure that these benefits are getting out to people, especially at a time like this."

Under the Casino License Agreement, the community benefit fund can be used for projects that could benefit health care, public education, retirement benefits, and infrastructure.

Two-day virtual summit will convene CNMI leaders

By IVA MAURIN
iva_maurin@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Leaders across the Commonwealth—from the Executive Branch, the Legislature, and business community, as well as members of the public—will take part in the first-ever CNMI Fiscal Response Summit from April 23, 2020 to April 28, 2020, to discuss the government's \$65-million revenue shortfall in fiscal year 2020.

The amount, \$65 million, is the deficit directly attributed to the COVID-19 outbreak,

as projected by the Fiscal Response Task Force designated by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to comprehensively review the fiscal and economic crisis being faced by the CNMI.

"The global outbreak of COVID-19 has resulted in a deep and dramatic shift in the structure of our economy and how our community interacts with one another and the world. These repercussions have caused tremendous consequences to employment, incomes and to obtaining the revenue necessary to support essential government services

and programs. ...Our community must come together to chart a path forward for its government in new and innovative ways," said Torres.

With only half of the fiscal year remaining to make adjustments, the task force, with technical support from Graduate School USA, will convene the summit "to allow for representatives of all stakeholders in the Commonwealth to fully comprehend and deeply understand the size and nature of the current crisis," said Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan).

The summit will build upon

the findings of the Governor's Fiscal Response Task Force, which is composed of members from the CNMI Department of Finance, Office of Management and Budget, and Graduate School USA. Last month, the task force created the Commonwealth Fiscal Response Briefing Paper that describes the fiscal position of the CNMI, the current economic climate, and the factors that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak.

The briefing paper outlines a framework to discuss reforms and a process for leaders within the CNMI to collaborate on addressing

longstanding structural issues.

According to Sablan, the kinds of reforms that are necessary to restructure the CNMI government and stabilize its finances will require people coming together from all sectors to honestly confront the problems and build consensus around solutions.

"Some painful decisions will have to be made, and it's important to have buy-in from the community, and especially the people and institutions that will be directly affected. I think it's also important for the process to be inclusive, participatory, and transparent, and to have sound data and the

technical analysis we need to guide our decisions."

Sablan added that USA Graduate School can provide the technical support, along with the professional staff within all three branches of government.

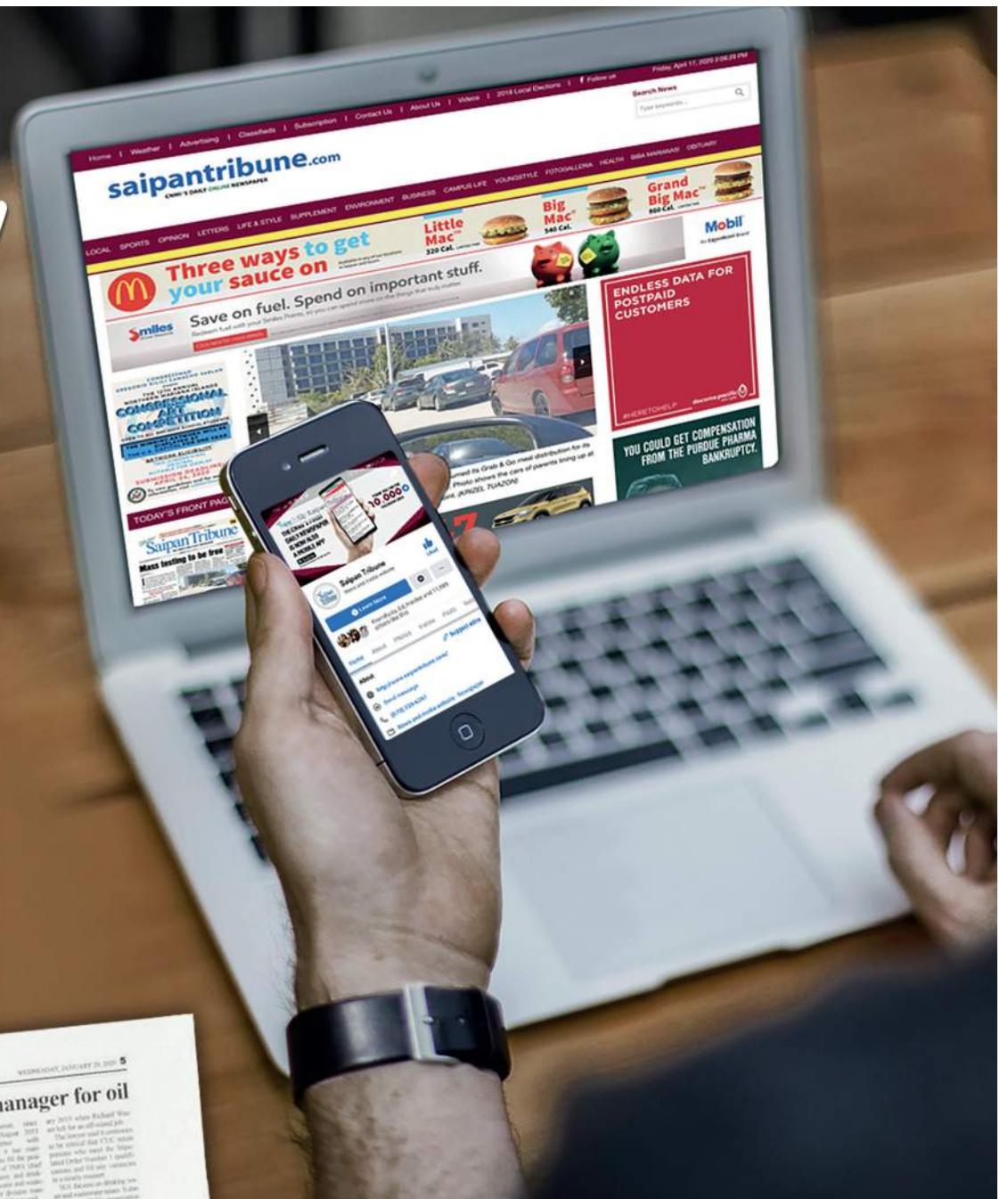
"The sooner we can go through this process together, the sooner we can develop an action plan that has the broad support of citizens and leaders and that will guide us through this most severe crisis and hopefully lay the groundwork for a healthier and more sustainable future."

The summit will begin today and will take place virtually, until April 27.

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Kilili: Marianas businesses get \$12.6M from PPP

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A total of 56 small businesses in the CNMI successfully applied for \$12.62 million in Paycheck Protection Program loans before funds were exhausted nationwide last Thursday, according to a statement from the office of Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP).

The program, created in

the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security, or “CARES,” Act, is meant to help small businesses and non-profits keep their staff on payroll during the coronavirus crisis. Recipients who use the money to pay staff for eight weeks and meet other conditions can have the loans converted to outright grants. Up to 25% of the loan may be used

to pay rent, utilities, and other business expenses.

“Marianas businesses responded very quickly to this opportunity,” Sablan said. “That is a good thing. Because the \$350 billion that Congress provided to the Small Business Administration for the Paycheck Protection Program is now all gone.”

Congress and the White House are, however, in negotiation for a second round of PPP funding with changes regarding who is eligible for the money. The CARES Act required that only businesses

with fewer than 500 employees could qualify for the loans/grants; but large restaurant and hotel chains with more than 500 workers have been able to get loans, because the law allows each individual restaurant or hotel in the chain to be separately eligible. This loophole contributed to the rapid commitment of the available funding and left many small businesses and non-profits without the help they need.

In the meantime, eligible businesses may also be able to turn to the SBA Debt Relief program, which pays the

principal, interest, and fees for businesses with SBA micro-loans or with loans from agency’s 7(a) and 504 loan programs. This relief is extended automatically to existing borrowers and is also available to new borrowers up to Sept. 27, 2020.

Economic Injury Disaster Loans provided through the CARES Act are another victim of their own success. The program—which can provide an emergency advance of up to \$10,000 to small businesses and private non-profits harmed by COVID-19—is currently closed, while the Small Business Administration attempts to process 5

million applications that have come in during the past weeks. The program will also need more funding to accept new applicants, another issue now being negotiated by Congress and the White House.

The EIDL advance does not need to be repaid under any circumstance, and may be used to keep employees on payroll, to pay for sick leave, meet increased production costs due to supply chain disruptions, or pay business obligations, including debts, rent and mortgage payments.

More information about CARES programs for business is available on Sablan’s official website. (PR)

Dry weather to persist in the Marianas

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Marianas will experience extreme to severe dry weather in the next few months, according to a forecast from the National Weather Services in Tiyan, Guam. According to a drought statement from NWS, drought continues to intensify across much of Micronesia.

“A drier than normal trade-wind pattern has persisted across much of Micronesia the past few months. Although the pattern has been typical for this time of year, rainfall has been inadequate for many islands. This has been primarily due to a fairly weak [Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone]. Additionally, anomalously warm water has persisted near the dateline the past several months. This warmer than normal water has encouraged convection near the dateline and suppressed convection farther west over much of Micronesia, especially far western Micronesia. This includes Yap state, the Republic of Palau, and the Mariana Islands,” the forecast stated.

NWS sees the drier-than-normal weather to continue in for the next few months.

“All guidance points to continued dry weather with only a few weak disturbances providing a few showers at times. The National Multi-Model Ensemble continues to suggest drier than normal weather will continue for the next month or two. This is consistent with the synoptic pattern,” NWS stated.

Due to the drought, the Marianas can expect 0.5 to 1.5 inches of rain in the next 10 days.

Islands that will experience extreme short-term drought to severe short-term drought include Guam, Saipan, Tinian, Rota, Wotje, Utirik, Ulithi, Woleai, Fananu and Hall islands, Namanuoto islands, Western Chuuk islands, Ailinglapalap, and Kwajalein.

There are no official water conservation measures in effect for the Mariana Islands. Saipan, however, is most susceptible for impacted groundwater, but officials report water levels are still above thresholds for concern.

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
ITB20-CHCC/CGC-DCMP-002

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 28, 2020 TIME:10:00AM

“LEASE OF VEHICLES”

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN DOWNLOAD THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FROM THE CHCC WEBSITE [WWW.CHCC.GOV.MP]. ONCE AT THE SITE, NAVIGATE TO **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS** TAB ON THE LEFT NAVIGATION BAR. CLICK ON THE URL FOR THIS RFP. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO ENTER DATA TO ALLOW US TO TRACK ALL REQUESTS FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY.

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/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
RFP20-CHCC/FACILITIES-003

NEW SUBMISSION DEADLINE: APRIL 30, 2020 TIME: 10:00 AM

“FIRE RATED DOOR REPLACEMENT & NEW INSTALLATION”

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*MANDATORY ASSESSMENT ON APRIL 14, 2020
@ 9:00 A.M. SAIPAN TIME @ THE CHCC FACILITY/MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT.

/S/ ESTHER L. MUNA
CHCC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

/S/ CORAZON P. ADA
CHCC DIRECTOR OF P&S



PUBLIC NOTICE

The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) is considering a request for Federal assistance from the CNMI Office of Planning & Development to construct *the Garapan Revitalization Project in Garapan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), EDA is conducting an assessment of the potential of the proposed project to affect the environment and/or historic properties. Notice is hereby given that the project is proposed to be located in, or may affect, a floodplain and/or wetland as defined by Executive Order (EO) 11988 and/or EO 11990.

The project is located in the “Garapan Core” district of Saipan. The project will involve A/E design and construction of improvements to the streets of the Garapan Core. The project will re-grade and re-pave approximately 10,685 total linear feet of streets within the district. Additionally, it will construct concrete curbs and sidewalks on both sides of the streets. Re-paved streets will generally be 24 ft. wide, with minimum 6 ft.-wide sidewalks. The project will include street lighting and landscaping as appropriate for a tourism district in a tropical environment. All construction works will occur within existing public rights-of-way. Streets to be improved include: Plumeria Ave. (north & south sections), Ginger Ave. (north & south sections), Coffee Tree Mall St., Royal Palm Ave., Coconut St., Date St., Paseo de Marianas, Palm St., Micro Beach Rd. (between Coral Tree Av. and Beach Rd.), and Beach Rd. (from Micro Beach Rd. to Garapan St.).

Project information is available for review at *Office of Planning & Development, Office of the Governor, Juan A. Sablan Memorial Building, Caller Box 10007, Isa Drive, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950 or by calling 670-237-2200 or 670-488-1221.*

If you have any information regarding potential impacts to historic properties or environmental resources including wetlands or floodplains associated with this proposed project, please provide it in writing to:

Regional Environmental Officer
Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
915 Second Avenue, Room 1890
Seattle, WA 98174
RDimmick@eda.gov

Comments received in the EDA Regional Office by 5:00 pm eastern on May 22, 2020, will be considered. A copy of the NEPA/NHPA decisional document will be available upon request at the above EDA Regional Office.

VOX POPULI

Earth Day in the time of COVID-19

By CHEVY ALPIO
alpiochevykate@gmail.com
REPORTER

Today, April 22, marks Earth Day, which is an annual event celebrated around the world to demonstrate support for environmental protection. First celebrated in 1970, it now celebrated in more than 193 countries. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, is limiting ways of celebrating Earth Day this year. *Saipan Tribune* talked to several CNMI residents about they are still doing it.



"Communities can continue to celebrate Earth Day by recycling, reducing waste, planting, spreading awareness on social media platforms, and simply enjoying time spent outdoors."

Anela Duenas, Finan Sisu

"I think it is still important to celebrate Earth Day, even if it's from home because the Earth is our home. ... I believe that everything starts with you. Protecting our planet starts with you. It could be as little as watering your plants or planting a tree. ... Nature could only do so much, we need to help it as much as we can."

Katelyn Rabang, Chalan Kanoa

CPA

From Page 1

proposed lease revenue discount/waiver for that six-month period is \$710,174.29, while for the seaports' tenants is \$519,124.94. This would bring the lease revenue waiver/discount to a total of \$1,229,299.

Saipan Tribune learned that there are 50 tenants at CNMI airports and 37 tenants at its seaports that will benefit the waiver/discount.

The six directors—Kimberlyn King-Hinds, Roman Tudela, Pete P. Reyes, Thomas P. Villagomez, Joseph Diaz, and Ramon Tebuteb—agreed to revisit the issue as needed. Barrie C. Toves was excused from the meeting as he is on Rota. King-Hinds presided over Monday night's special/emergency board meeting held between the arrival and depar-

ture terminals of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

King-Hinds said yesterday that the road to economic recovery is only going to be harder and longer if some of CPA's industry partners are not there standing with them when the time comes to fully open the Commonwealth's borders.

"CPA is committed to the success of our partners. Their success is our success," she said. "We hope that this provides them a little bit of relief as we weather this pandemic together."

She said their initial idea about giving relief to tenants was deferments on their leases, but King-Hinds said she does not like deferments as it's basically digging a bigger, deeper financial hole for businesses that are already in a hole to begin with.

She disclosed that CPA was provided with \$22.8 million relief because the federal government knows

"Although we cannot pick up trash or do anything in public as a huge group, we can all celebrate it individually. ... We can all start picking

up some trash, recycle, not litter, conserve water, etc. We may not be doing this together physically, but if we all do it with the same

reason and with one heart, we can say that we did it together. This COVID-19 pandemic should not stop us from appreciating our island and protecting it. No one should harm our island in any way. Everyone should protect it. If you see trash, pick it up. Try conserving water. There are many ways to celebrate Earth Day in your home."

Iris Lee, Chalan Kanoa



that their tenants are going to have challenges with paying the rent when no income is coming in.

She said that \$22.8 million contemplates that loss to CPA.

"It's only right that we don't profit from this windfall, but use it to benefit the entire industry so that we can all hopefully make it to the finish line and be ready to fire up this economy when the time comes," King-Hinds said.

Toves, who chairs the board's Airport Facilities Committee, earlier stated that since they received news that CPA is expecting the Federal Aviation Administration to award \$22.8 million to CPA under the CARES Act, CPA should consider helping out its tenants.

"We're all in this [COVID-19] pandemic together and therefore we should all come together to help each other out," Toves said.

under the CARES Act, or the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. PSS is guaranteed over \$12 million in financial aid under recently passed CARES Act which they expect to receive around June.

"So currently we haven't had direction as to when the funds would be paid. There was a discussion of paying them overtime, so that was unclear, so along with authorizing the commissioner to borrow money, the thing the board needs to decide is when we will pay back MPLT," Mocanu said.

Additionally, the resolution also ensures that a payment to MPLT will be made once PSS receives funding from the CARES Act.

"I'm confused. The purpose of this meeting was to get it passed so we could get the loan and pay our teachers. What's going on? This is unbelievable. You turned your back on our teachers and employees," said Miura.

Ada also questioned why the two board members voted no to the proposed resolution.

Tenorio, however, said she made her vote and that she did not need to explain herself.

PSS legal counsel Tiberius Mocanu explained that the resolution authorizes the education commissioner to negotiate with MPLT the terms for a loan that will be payable once PSS receives the funds it expects to get

and to celebrate the achievement. We will be providing some information in the next few days about a virtual recognition activity," Eliptico said.

The Public School System has also opted to postpone its graduation ceremony, but discussions have been ongoing about how they can provide a graduation for the Class of 2020 despite the current challenges wrought by COVID-19.

Education Commissioner Dr. Al-

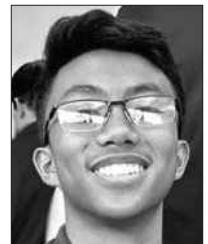
fred Ada said that, because the drive-thru method has proven successful in the past with the Child Nutrition Program meal distribution as an example, PSS administration is looking at drive-thru diploma distributions.

Although the drive-thru diploma distribution is still on the planning stages, Ada said there is still a possibility that seniors will have their graduation, even if it might be later in the year, around August or October.



I believe that Earth Day should still be celebrated, even with the COVID-19 pandemic. We can do so by cleaning up around our homes or areas near it. Keeping social distancing in mind, people can contribute whenever they go out by throwing trash they see around them. Little things matter and, with that our Earth can heal. Seeing as there are [fewer] cars and people out there now, there's a good chance there will be less pollution in the air and land. Earth is our home and we should contribute any way we can to ensure its preservation."

Alex Tudela, Dandan



"Not all special days need to be celebrated with a group at once. It doesn't take 20 people for you to go outside your house and plant a tree, pick trash up, or simply water your garden. ... I believe that people should still find the time to celebrate Earth Day and simply go outside and plant something."

Jeremiah Diaz, Fina Sisu

A longer version of this story is available at www.saipantribune.com

MORE

From Page 1

social media, via a livestream Facebook video, to let the community know that CHCC received 25 ventilators, medical supplies, and UV lights for infection control.

Torres said the supplies and equipment will be stationed at the alternate care site at Kanoa Resort in Susupe. Additionally, the target date for the alternate care site to be finished is May 7, 2020.

"We have ordered some supplies that will be coming in every week to hopefully fill the requirement and get the facility up and running," said Torres. The CNMI should be receiving more ventilators within this week.

Torres raises more attention to social distancing, proper hygiene, and to "stay away from the man'amko [the elderly]," who are reportedly more vulnerable to COVID-19.

According to COVID-19 Task Force chair Warren Villagomez, alternate care site will be specifically for intensive care unit capabilities, all persons under investigation, and COVID-19 treatment.

"We're very happy for that, at this moment in time, we are responding to COVID-19 situation in the CNMI," Villagomez said in an interview with television station KSPN 2. "With all the efforts from the governor, lieutenant governor, and CHCC chief executive officer Esther Muna, we came together and made sure that we brought all the materials in time to build on and finish what we are expecting in two/three months."

Villagomez stated that the alternate care site will have a pharmacy room, doctors room, conference room, and the beds to assist individuals in need of critical care.

Medical field hospital

What was called the medical field hospital is now officially called the Medical Care and Treatment Site that is located at the upper parking lot of the Commonwealth Health Center.

Brig. Gen. Tracy L. Smith, commander of the 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support), who was on island over the weekend, visited the Medical Care and Treatment Site to see what the U.S. Department of Defense could help the CNMI

with in its fight against the coronavirus. Smith stated in a TV interview that she feels confident that the government is prepared should the number of confirmed COVID-19 positive increases in the CNMI.

"With the governor and [COVID-19] Task Force aggressive efforts, we are very impressed with the MCATS, and the progress of the alternative care site," said Smith.

Five Star Builders is the contractor that is building the temporary hospital. The target date for the completion of the MCATS is today.

According to Torres, of the 50 beds that the CNMI received earlier this month, 40 will be designated to the MCATS.

COVID-19 in Guam

It's been four days since Guam has had a confirmed COVID-19 positive case.

"Our numbers over the past few days have been promising and have shown that our measures are working. They were implemented early and aggressively—guided by science, sound medical advice, and what we learned from other countries," said Guam's Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero in a Facebook post.

Guam's cases are at a steady 136 confirmed cases with 114 recoveries and six deaths.

"So much of our recovery depends on getting it right. Opening [up the island] too soon can mean a resurgence [in] new infections. In that event, we must be ready to identify, test, and isolate all new cases and trace every contact they made to stop further transmission," said Leon Guerrero.

Guam's medical team continues to monitor, treat, and isolate the remaining cases.

"Living through these social isolation measures is not easy. But I know some in our community have been affected more than others, that for them this isn't just a public health issue but an economic one too," said Leon Guerrero.

According to the Joint Information Center in Guam, "COVID-19 test results are reported from multiple labs at varying times of the day. The cumulative total from all labs will be reported on a nightly basis. Updated results will be provided this evening, once all tests from today are completed."

BOE

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a board-approved resolution on the MPLT loan to kick-start the loan process, according to Orsini.

Education Commissioner Dr. Alfred Ada confirmed that after asking about a loan with MPLT over a week ago, they were told that a board resolution is needed to begin processing their loan of \$3.4 million.

Following the deadlock, teacher representative Paul Miura voiced a concern that, by voting no to approve the resolution, Tenorio and Atalig are turning their backs on teachers.

NMC

From Page 1

originally scheduled for May 23, is officially postponed until December 2020.

However, NMC is looking at a virtual ceremony to provide some form of recognition for graduating students. "We recognize that it is important to acknowledge this important milestone

The other front-liners in this new normal



Imelda Estolas, a cashier at the KS Market in Garapan, wears her mask, gloves, and have faith in the plastic cover that separates her from customers.

BEA CABRERA

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrera@saipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

On your next trip out of the house, remember the cashier at the grocery store, the tire shop employee, the loader of water gallons at the water station, and other people with similar jobs who are also going out of their way to help us keep a certain sense of normalcy. These are the other kind of front-liners, who go to work every day just so we can live out our new normal amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

The world's health care front-liners certainly deserve all the accolades and thanks that are being heaped on them right now because of the CO-

VID-19 pandemic, but the situation has also created this new kind of front-liners who keep the islands' economy alive and every family's needs intact.

Behind her cash register, Imelda Estolas of KS Market in Garapan is protected by a plastic cover, the kind that you use to protect books that is attached from the ceiling down to the bubble gum and candy boxes at the counter. On this side of the grocery, she finds comfort and confidence to do her job.

"Knowing how serious and lethal this virus is, I'm afraid of course. ...If I had a choice, I'd rather be in home quarantine, too, just like everyone else, but I know that this is the time that I am needed the

most," she said

"People need food and other goods and we provide that. This is what drives me to come here to wear my mask and gloves, turn on the lights, and open the grocery. Nearby groceries have closed since the government asked for reduced business hours and curfew implemented," she added.

Estolas said it is not about profit or getting her salary every two weeks. "It is basically just my heart for service. I feel proud that we can help the community even in this small way and glad that my boss prioritizes our health as well because we operate on reduced hours. My hope is that the CNMI and the whole



Rowell Ubilas uses infrared in taking customers' body temperature at LJ Supermarket on Middle Road.

BEA CABRERA



Tire Shop owner Mei Xianzhu Reyes said, "People need the service we provide."

BEA CABRERA



Dedicated workers at Star Water Co. in Garapan. "We are open especially during times of crisis," Star Water accounting clerk Michelle Galanza said.

BEA CABRERA

world can bounce back soon."

LJ Supermarket on Middle Road takes safety precautions seriously. Before you enter, Rowell Ubilas will meet you, spray sanitizer on your hands and the soles of your shoes. Once inside, he will ask you to stand 6 feet away to check your body temperature on his laptop computer and you get to come in to shop once he clears you.

"The owner would rather have a few customers inside at a time to ensure social distancing is followed and for the safety of everyone's health. For my part, I wear double masks and gloves as it helps me feel protected and do my job well," he said.

"I meet different people at the door every day to check and clear them. I have already sent away people, those who are not wearing socks or shoes

because it is beneficial to them, to our store, and the customers inside. We do not think that we should have many customers but how are we going to make it safe for them," he said.

Mei Xianzhu Reyes fixes a flat tire in 5 minutes at her shop in Dandan. Every day, her shop is filled with customers who need new tires or a car wash. "Life goes on for us but we do not start work without our masks and gloves. Those are pretty much our uniform," she said.

"At the end of the day, we go home, take a shower, and throw our clothes in the washer. Our business is one of life's basics as almost everyone drives a car and they will probably need air or new tires. We are open because we have work to do and people need this service," she added.

"I want the whole CNMI community to stay strong and may we all work together to spread awareness and not the virus."

"...Aside from us, the front-liners that provide service, I feel like we are all heroes because we are all fighting not to spread and stay away from this virus," she added.

Car burglary at Ladder Beach in Obyan

On Monday, April 20, 2020, at about 4:45pm, the CNMI Department of Public Safety received a call reporting an auto burglary incident at the Ladder Beach parking lot in Obyan, Saipan.

At about 4:53pm, a police unit met with the caller at the scene. The caller directed po-

lice to the vehicle, where the officer noticed a broken rear driver-side window. The caller stated that the car was parked for about an hour.

Items reported missing include a black, unbranded sling bag purse, a black unbranded square wallet, a Korean driver's license, and about \$80 in cash.

If you or someone you know has any information relating to this crime, call 911 immediately, or if you wish to remain anonymous you may call the CNMI Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272. Crime Stoppers pays up to \$1,000 for any information leading to an arrest. (PR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miss Earth Marianas Leisha Deleon Guerrero.

comfort, support, security, and reassurance to all, considering you have a family of your own. Our youth admires each of you in hopes to one day become just like you. Simply because of the honor, you carry on serving our islands," she said.

Mount Carmel School teacher Jener Pineda likened front-liners to modern day heroes. "Thank you very much to our modern-day heroes, to front-liners/first responders, for your dedication and sacrifices in the battle against COVID-19." He described front-liners as "selfless and courageous" for doing their job, adding that "we are with you." (Chevy Alipio)

Others in the community are also grateful.

"Every day you wake up ready to risk your lives and health for the sake of our people. Each day you have the choice, and you choose to help our community move forward amidst these weary times. Thank you for being truly brave and working endlessly. Without you, our society would not be where it is today," she said in a statement.

Deleon Guerrero added that the people of the CNMI will forever be in debt for the selflessness and sacrifice shown by the front-liners and are good role models for the islands' youth.

"You selflessly provide

DOD seeks ways to help NMI's COVID-19 response efforts

Over the weekend, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres met with Brig. Gen. Tracy L. Smith, commander of the 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support) to talk about how the Department of Defense can best support the CNMI in its response efforts to combat COVID-19.

The 18th MC commander arrived on Saipan on Saturday with her team of medical planners to synchronize the needs of the Commonwealth with key medical resources.

"Our objective for our visit is to address the unmet needs that the governor identified and to synchronize the pieces together in order to maximize the resources we have by bringing the right capability at the right time," said Smith.

The brigadier general thanked the governor for his aggressive efforts to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in the Commonwealth.

"As medical professionals, we truly appreciate the governor's aggressiveness in his mitigation measures to protect the Marianas. Gov. Torres has taken a phenomenal approach, and we thank him for his aggressiveness. The governor has made it easier for medical professionals and for us who are here to support the Marianas," said Smith.

For his part, Torres noted that the current COVID-19 crisis is different from other calamities that he has experienced, but he acknowledged that being surrounded by good people makes decision-making easier no matter how difficult it may be.

"I have been through other disasters, but our current crisis is a health concern. I have good people working with me: Commonwealth Healthcare



Gov. Ralph DLG Torres led Brig. Gen. Tracy L. Smith and her medical planners meet at the Hyatt Regency Saipan ballroom to determine the requirement in preparation for the deployment of DoD medical resources to the CNMI.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



The team goes through the construction work at the Kanoa Resort as it is renovated to become an alternate care site.

Corp. chief executive officer Esther L. Muna, COVID-19 Task Force [chair] Warren Villagomez, our authorized representative to [the Federal Emergency Management Agency] Patrick Guerrero, special assistant for Homeland Security and Emergency Management Gerald Deleon Guerrero, Dr. John Tudela, contractors, our federal partners, and everyone involved in the response efforts help in making informed decisions," said Torres.

He added that he is follow-

ing the situations that are unfolding in the U.S. mainland and across the globe.

"Recognizing the challenges that they are facing motivates me even more to give that extra push to do everything we can to protect our community. I would rather fail trying, instead of not trying at all. With the support of our federal partners, I am determined to keep my community as protected as possible and to win this fight for all of us here in the Marianas," said Torres.

After their meeting at the Commonwealth Health Center, Torres led Smith and her medical planners to the Kanoa Resort for an onsite

assessment to determine the requirement of the alternate care site and other needs in preparation for the deployment of DoD medical resources to the CNMI.

Six critical care nurses will be deployed to the CNMI in the coming weeks with a second batch of critical care capabilities forthcoming to equip the alternate care site with medical resources upon completion.

"I want to thank Brigadier General Tracy Smith, her medical team that are here, and the 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support), for their support. Seeing CEO Muna, the Task Force, HSEM, all our

first responders, our federal partners who are on island, and knowing that President Trump, HHS, CDC, FEMA and DoD are doing all they can to help us through this crisis drives our efforts forward. I also thank U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, the U.S. Army Pacific, Joint Region Marianas, the 9th Mission Command Support, and Army Reservist Saipan Units," said Torres.

On March 30, 2020, Torres requested for Defense Support of Civil Authorities Mission for deployment of key resources to augment local health care capabilities. In response to the governor's request, Adm. Phillip Davidson, U.S. Indo-Pacific Commander, assured Torres of DoD's commitment to helping the CNMI get through this crisis together.

Smith is a native of the Marianas and is the first Chamorro female from Guam to make the rank of general officer in the Armed Forces. The Library of Congress records Smith's promotion to brigadier general in the U.S. Army Reserve Medical Service Corps in 2016 by Senate confirmation.

The 18th Medical Command (Deployment Support) is an expeditionary Medical Theater Enabling Command based in Hawaii whose mission is to execute mission command through the planning and synchronization of medical functions and ensuring readiness of Army medical units within the Indo-Asia Pacific Region. (PR)



After a meeting at the Commonwealth Health Center, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres led Brig. Gen. Tracy L. Smith and her medical planners to the Kanoa Resort for an onsite assessment.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Action needed for SS beneficiaries to receive \$500 per child payment

Social Security beneficiaries and Supplemental Security Income recipients who don't file tax returns will start receiving their automatic Economic Impact Payments directly from the Treasury Department soon.

People receiving benefits who did not file 2018 or 2019 taxes, and have qualifying children under age 17, however, should not wait for their automatic \$1,200 individual payment. They should immediately go to the IRS's webpage at www.irs.gov/coronavirus/non-filers-enter-payment-info-here and visit the *Non-Filers: Enter Payment Info Here* section to provide their information.

Social Security retirement, survivors, and disability insurance beneficiaries with dependent children and who did not file 2018 or 2019 taxes need to

act by Wednesday, April 22, in order to receive additional payments for their eligible children quickly. SSI recipients need to take this action by later this month; a specific date will be available soon.

By taking this proactive step to enter information on the IRS website about them and their qualifying children, they will also receive the \$500 per dependent child payment in addition to their \$1,200 individual payment. If beneficiaries in this group do not provide their information to the IRS soon, their payment at this time will be \$1,200. People would then be required to file a tax year 2020 tax return to obtain the additional \$500 per eligible child.

"I urge Social Security and SSI recipients with qualifying children who do not normally file taxes to take action now.

All program services for the Weatherization Assistance Program and the State Energy Program shall remain temporarily suspended for another 30 days.

In a notice yesterday, the CNMI Department of Public Works cited the recent Governor's Executive Order 2020-06 as the reason for the pro-

grams' suspension.

The executive order, issued on April 15, 2020, renews the Declaration of State of Public Health Emergency and continued Declaration of a State of Significant Emergency for 30 days due to the imminent threat posed by COVID-19.

The directive includes all memoranda, directives, waivers of regulations, and other measures taken in accordance with Executive Order 2020-04.

The Division of Energy will announce additional information and updates on program services once it becomes available, or its office operations resume and return to normal. (PR)

DPW: Energy programs remain suspended for 30 days

New website launched for Office of the Governor

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios announced yesterday the launch of a new website for the CNMI Office of the Governor, governor.gov.mp, to provide residents of the Marianas the latest information on COVID-19, as well as other updates from the CNMI government.

"Through this new website, CNMI residents will be able to read the latest press releases, executive actions, priorities, and updates from our office and administration, as well as the latest information on our response to the global pandemic from our COVID-19 Task Force and the Com-

monwealth Health Care Corp. There is a lot of work being done, and we want to share updates and services for our people," said Torres.

"Our goal is to provide a centralized website that has all information from our efforts as a government, especially in our response to CO-

VID-19. This includes updates from our departments with their websites and our plans as an administration moving forward. We hope this resource is valuable for our community," said Palacios.

Built with the help of TurnKey Solutions, governor.gov.mp is the official website of the CNMI Office of the Governor.

"Gov. Torres and Lt. Gov. Palacios believe in making sure that government services and accurate public information are being shared

with the community as soon as possible, especially now with this global pandemic. People have an insatiable appetite for news and content, and they want updated information. The goal of governor.gov.mp is to bring government services to the people of the Marianas through a convenient web portal, in addition to social media like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter," said press secretary Kevin Bautista.

Torres noted that a lot of information will be provided

to the public in the coming weeks, as federal relief, upgrades to CHCC medical facilities, and alternate care sites will be completed as part of the CNMI COVID-19 response efforts.

"Our website will provide instructions on unemployment assistance for both government and private sector employees who qualify, as well as updates on expanding our capacity at the hospital and at our alternate care site at Kanoa Resort to prepare for potential increase in COVID-19 cases. We continue to be prepared, and we will update the Marianas of our progress," said Torres. (PR)



Photo shows the Home Page of the newly-launched governor.gov.mp website.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

THINGS TO KNOW

As of April 21, 2020. All information may change without prior notice. For corrections and additions to this list, send an email to editor@saipantribune.com or chevy_alipio@saipantribune.com, or call 235-6397 or 235-2440.

Saipan municipal ID renewals

Effective April 27, 2020 the Office of the Mayor of Saipan's ID section will be providing an online submission and scheduled curbside pick-up service for municipal ID renewals. Get more information by clicking the link at www.saipantribune.com.

PUA Fact Sheet

Fact sheet on Pandemic Unemployment Assistance for the CNMI. For more information on the PUA program, review Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) No. 16-20 at https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/corr_doc.cfm?docn=4628. See FACT SHEET at link on www.saipantribune.com. (Use PUA Fact Sheet for the CNMI.pdf)

BECQ continues to provide services

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality is providing limited services to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Get more details by clicking on the link at www.saipantribune.com.

USDA aid for rural residents, businesses, communities

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development

has taken a number of actions to help rural residents, businesses and communities affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. To learn more, go to https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/USDA_RD_SA_COVID19_CUMULATIVEUpdate04152020.pdf

WHO UPDATE

Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19. See link at www.saipantribune.com.

BANK HOURS

■ Bank of Hawaii: Monday to Friday - 9am to 1pm (Saturdays closed)

■ Bank of Guam Chalan Kanoa: Closed temporarily

■ Bank of Guam Garapan: Monday to Friday - 9am-1pm; Saturday closed

■ First Hawaiian Bank Oleai: Monday to Friday - 9am-1pm; Saturday closed

■ First Hawaiian Bank Gualo Rai: Monday to Friday - 9am-1pm; Saturday closed

US POSTAL SERVICE

■ USPS Chalan Kanoa: Monday to Friday - 8:30am-4pm; Sat 9am-12pm

■ USPS San Vicente: Monday to Friday - 12pm-5:30pm; Sat 12pm-3pm

SUPERMARKETS

For a list of the status of open and closed stores and those with limited hours, see link at www.saipantribune.com.

RESTAURANTS

For a list of the status of open and closed restaurants and those with limited hours, see

OTHER BUSINESSES:

For a list of their business operations status, see link at www.saipantribune.com.

MEDICAL SERVICES

For a list of the status of open and closed medical services and those with limited hours, see link at www.saipantribune.com.

HOTELS

For a partial list of the status of open and closed hotels and those with limited hours, see link at www.saipantribune.com.

ONLINE RESOURCES

■ Demystifying the CARES ACT: A primer for businesses. Plus Saipan Chamber of Commerce updates. See <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/De-mystifying-the-CARES-ACT-and-Local-Updates.html?soid=1129193858340&aid=0E XsNhZzzis>

■ Commonwealth Health Care Corp. services. See link at www.saipantribune.com.

■ Frequently-asked-questions about direct assistance under CARES Act. See link at www.saipantribune.com.

■ Needing mental health tips? See link at www.saipantribune.com.

■ Avoid COVID-19 scams: Attorney General Edward Manibusan issues alert of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) scams. See link at www.saipantribune.com.

Source: Compiled by Saipan Tribune/Chevy Alipio

Torres



through a convenient web portal, in addition to social media like Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter," said press secretary Kevin Bautista.

Torres noted that a lot of information will be provided



ELIMINATION OF FORM N-560AB

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is no longer issuing Form N-560AB, Certificate of Citizenship, effective Friday, April 10, 2020. USCIS is now issuing Form N-560A for all Certificates of Citizenship associated with Forms N-600, N-600K and Child Citizenship Act adopted children. Previously issued Forms N-560AB will remain valid. Form N-560AB and N-560A have identical security features.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Water service interruptions set

There is a scheduled water service interruption for customers in portions of As Lito, As Perdido, and Koblerville (from St. Jude Church to ABCD Market in Koblerville) tomorrow, Thursday, April 24, 2020, from 8:30am to 3:30pm.

Water service to the affected areas will resume soon after.

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. water operations and leak detection personnel discovered a leak on a 6-inch transmission line on Exploring Drive of Airport Road Dandan limiting the volume to the water tank, therefore, reducing the water pressure. This damaged line is affecting the Dandan water tank as water is lost prior to entering the tank.

CUC urges customers in the

affected areas to practice water conservation and to contact the CUC Customer Call Center to report other identified leaks for repairs.

In portions of As Lito, As Perdido, Koblerville, San Vicente and Dandan Tank service areas

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. water operations and leak detection personnel discovered a leak on a 6-inch transmission line on Exploring Drive of Airport Road Dandan limiting the volume to the water tank, therefore, reducing the water pressure. This damaged line is affecting the Dandan water tank as water is lost prior to entering the tank.

The Dandan tank service area in Lower Dandan Homestead, Airport Road, portions of Kannat Tabla, Fina Sisu, As Lito, As Perdido, and Kobler-

ville (from the St. Jude Church to the ABCD Market) will experience low water pressure to no water from 9am to 3pm daily due to low tank levels.

CUC water operators and leak detection personnel will be conducting leak detections in the San Vicente and Dandan Tank Service areas to identify problems in the distribution system affecting the water tank levels.

Customers in the affected areas are highly recommended to practice water conservation during this dry season period and to contact the CUC Customer Call Center to report leaks for repairs.

CUC continues to work diligently to minimize any inconvenience to its customers. For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor our Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). (PR)

Opinion

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Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com

Mark Rabago ASSOCIATE EDITOR
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Earth Day, then and now

By TIA NELSON
Tribune News Service



Tia Nelson is managing director of the Outrider Foundation, a Wisconsin-based, globally focused nonprofit group dedicated to focusing on issues affecting the long-term well-being of the planet. This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is operated by The Progressive magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.

I was almost 14 years old on April 22, 1970, the first Earth Day. I spent the day picking up trash at my junior high school, along with other young people.

My father, the late Wisconsin U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson, came up with the idea of Earth Day. He said its purpose was to "get a nationwide demonstration of concern for the environment so large that it would shake the political establishment out of its lethargy."

Twenty million people responded to his call to action that day. In doing so, they demonstrated the power of individual action to change the course of history and help build a brighter future.

That first Earth Day ended up sparking a global movement that was successful beyond my father's wildest dreams. It united people across political lines to take concrete steps toward a healthier planet, including the passage of the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act and the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Now, as we approach the 50th anniversary of the first Earth Day, the planet is in the throes of a sweeping pandemic that requires an unprecedented level of global commitment and cooperation. It is a moment that could have a profound impact on humankind's response to the existential threat posed by climate change.

The threat of climate change is as great or greater than that of the coronavirus. Perhaps we will learn, in the spirit of Earth Day, that we are able to make the collective sacrifices required to combat a common threat.

Even before the COVID-19 outbreak, the modern environmental movement was energized. Yet when it comes to my father's original vision of an inclusive, bipartisan environmental movement rooted in social justice, we still have work to do. Today, as we face the most significant health and environmental challenges of all time, it's critical that we take stock of the problems and opportunities they bring.

"Our goal is not just an environment of clean air and water and scenic beauty," my father said on Earth Day 1970 during his speech in Denver. "The objective is an environment of decency, quality and mutual respect for all human beings and all other living creatures."

He believed that we all have the right to clean air and clean water, and to economic and environmental well-being. And he believed in the power of everyday Americans to make a difference.

In recent years, the environmental community and the

See EARTH on Next Page



Life after coronavirus will never be the same? Let's just see about that

I am no seer.

I cannot see around corners.

No one will ever mistake me for a visionary.

But I know that, despite the dire predictions we're hearing, our lives will return to normal one day. Our children will return to their classrooms and to their playgrounds. Bars and restaurants will fill up again. Our retirement accounts will eventually recover. We will resume our invasion of one another's personal space.

Human nature is an immutable thing.

You say coronavirus will bring us together in the belated realization that all of humanity is inextricably linked? Yes, we'll see some of that. But we'll also see more people fighting over rolls of toilet paper and racists attacking people who look Asian. We humans are a complex species, capable of the very best behaviors and the very worst.

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, there were sweeping prophecies about lasting social changes.

Time magazine's Roger Rosenblatt penned a famous essay declaring an end to "the age of irony."

"The good folks in charge of America's intellectual life have insisted that nothing was to be believed or taken seriously," he wrote. "With a giggle and a smirk, our chattering classes—our columnists and pop culture makers—declared that detachment and personal whimsy were the necessary tools for an oh-so-cool life."

That piece has been much mocked over the years. Irony after all, is not a fad. It is a coping strategy, a survival technique. When the most corrupt president in recent American history wins on a promise to "drain the swamp," there is no question that irony is immortal.

As for the pop culture makers—the late-night TV hosts, for example—the irony is more lethal than ever. David Letterman's frivolous "Top Ten" list has long since given way to the biting sensibility of "The Daily Show," and its progeny: "Last Week Tonight With John Oliver," Samantha Bee's "Full Frontal," "The Late Show With Stephen Colbert."

INCREMENTAL CHANGE

Four years after 9/11, in 2005, Hurricane Katrina pulled back the curtain on an inept federal government's devastating lack of emergency preparedness. After that shameful moment, it was said, everything was going to change—for the better.

"This government will learn the lessons of Hurricane Katrina," promised then-President George W. Bush. "We are going to review every action and make necessary changes so that we are better prepared for any challenge of nature, or act of evil men, that would threaten our people."

In 2008, we elected our first black president, an extraordinary

By ROBIN ABCARIAN
Los Angeles Times



Robin Abcarian is an opinion columnist at the Los Angeles Times.

achievement for a nation built on slavery. Many of us wanted to believe we'd turned the corner on our racist past, even that we had become a post-racial society. Instead, we got the election of Donald Trump, a man who describes white nationalists as "very fine people."

A single, momentous event can certainly nudge American culture, but the changes can be subtle and ease as time passes, rather than producing the kind of grand transformations so many are predicting today. (No more physical schoolrooms! No more business conferences!)

Our behaviors may change dramatically for a time, but our natures will not.

LASTING IMPACT

I turned to Rice University historian Douglas Brinkley, who has written about critical moments in U.S. history, including Hurricane Katrina, for thoughts about whether the coronavirus might change us in lasting ways, and if so, how.

He predicts we will become more "sanitation-minded." People will probably continue to stockpile, he said as "a little bit of a survivalist mentality has struck the land."

The fact that the richest country in the world was caught flat-footed on the new coronavirus, however, is hard to fathom. "We are in the 21st century, and the tech age. It's embarrassing."

"The question I am not sure about," he said, "is whether this is a one-off, 100-year event, or is a wave, due to planetary dislocation of the natural world and the destruction of ecosystems. Ask anybody who studies wildlife biology—you rip down ecosystems, and strange viruses will emerge frequently. Plagues will come."

Brinkley is working on a book, "Silent Spring Revolution," about presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard Nixon and the 1960s environmental movement that led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, the clean air and water acts, the Endangered Species Act and the cleanup of the Great Lakes and rivers. "The country galvanized for a decade—a

See LIFE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Earth Day shows we're capable of changing how we live

Scientists warned our leaders about the danger. Our leaders ignored them, undermined them and disbanded their programs. It was clear that politically difficult choices would be necessary to save thousands, perhaps even millions, of lives, and that the earlier we acted, the better off we would be. Continuing business as usual would be deadly.

Our leaders knew all this, and yet almost all of them failed to act—imperiling all of us, but especially the most vulnerable: people of color, indigenous people, the medically fragile, the disabled, the unhoused and those earning poverty wages.

The parallels between the COVID-19 crisis and the climate crisis are unmistakable. Just as President Donald Trump and governors like Florida's Ron DeSantis failed to act boldly and decisively to protect people and workers from the ravages of the coronavirus, they and like-minded predecessors spent the last four decades missing opportunities to flatten the curve of human-caused global warming.

Wednesday, April 22, is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. It's a historic day, and we'll be using it, in part, to take stock of the past. After decades of denial and delay, there's still a lot of work to be done to get us off the path of planetary destruction. But there are also reasons for optimism.

Over the past decade, more than 300 coal plants have closed, and many of them have been replaced by affordable clean energy. The price of renewable energy is now so low that nearly half of the world's coal plants will be unprofitable this year. It's clear that we're moving beyond coal and all dirty fuels faster than would have seemed possible even a few years ago.

Earth Day will also be a time to look forward and demand in innovative ways the just and equitable future we all deserve. The youth leaders planning for the biggest climate strike yet changed their plans to a 72-hour livestream of strikers, divestment activi-

POINT

sts, and everyday people invested in the health of this planet. For the first time, Earth Day will take place entirely online.

Participants in Earth Day Live will use our 72 hours together to pressure all the centers of power in this country to take rapid action to protect our homes and our families against the floods, fires and storms that are already locked in—and to keep worse ones from becoming inevitable. We have the solutions, and we are building the political power needed to implement them.

On Earth Day, the youth organizers of the climate strike will harness the power of storytelling and community building to offer the world an opportunity to hear from those on the front lines of both crises. Their stories will help build a narrative about how we survive times of crisis through solidarity and by caring for one another and our planet.

The next day, we will be confronting those big banks, asset managers and insurers that continue to support the fossil fuel industry. That means challenging their insistence on doing business as usual no matter what's going on in the world and no matter whose lives are put at risk. Already, we've seen that some of the world's largest companies, like asset management giant BlackRock, can be moved by moral protest. The company has pledged to undertake one of the largest-ever divestments from coal, and to place sustainability at the center of its business. With BlackRock playing a leading role in the government's COVID-19 stimulus efforts, it's a crucial moment to keep the pressure on.

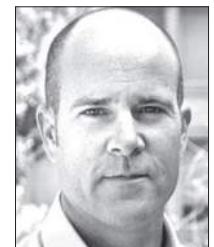
The third day will be a massive youth voter drive aimed at amplifying young people's voices leading up to the 2020 elections and beyond. These young people are watching how their leaders respond—or fail to respond—to both the climate crisis and the COVID crisis.

Soon after this livestream, Congress will come back into session to hammer out another COVID-19 stimulus package. Will

legislators take this opportunity to make a down payment on a more just and sustainable economy? Will they seize this chance to put millions of Americans back to work, this time in family-sustaining jobs building the green infrastructure of the future? We cannot afford to squander this opportunity to make our country stronger and more resilient to future disasters.

As brutal as they are, both the climate crisis and the COVID crisis offer a chance to rewrite the rules of our society and our economy so they work for everyone who lives in this country—not just the wealthy and connected. The choices we make now will shape our country for decades, if not longer. Earth Day at 50 is a time to come together to demand what we need so all of us can survive the shocks the next decades will bring.

This pandemic has shown what's possible if we listen to the scientists, and how much death and suffering can be avoided when our leaders respond to those warnings with swift, decisive action. If nothing else, it has shown us that we're capable of changing almost everything about how we live in the name of love, solidarity and collective survival. These are lessons we must return to not only during the Earth Day celebration but during the fight for our future.



Michael Brune is executive director of the Sierra Club. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.

Let's really celebrate the 50th Earth Day with some humble pie

April 22 marks the 50th Earth Day, born in the height of fears of the population bomb, global famine, mi-

asmatic air and the rapid decline of the West into post-civilizational chaos.

How did that all work out? The dire predictions were wrong, but there is one lasting legacy: on Dec. 2, 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency was born. It was purposefully and politically recobbled from other parts of the federal bureaucracy by Richard Nixon into one central agency granted eternal life in Washington, D.C.

Failed predictions aside, there were some serious air quality problems, especially in urban air sheds; and the EPA along with the states did a pretty good job of cleaning things up. That was low-hanging fruit the agency could easily pick off.

A much larger, less manageable problem was acid rain. While rainfall is naturally a bit acidic, addition of sulfur and nitrogen oxides, mainly from the combustion of coal, clearly increase acidity. Air quality around coal-fired power plants was pretty bad, but local solutions resulted in multistate problems. The mantra of those days was “the solution to pollution is dilution,” so power plant chimneys moved skyward. The clustering of gen-

COUNTERPOINT

eration facilities along major rivers like the Ohio, where they had easy access to coal, resulted in large regions of the East being subjected to increasingly acid precipitation, as the new plants injected sulfate aerosols high enough in the atmosphere to travel hundreds, even thousands of miles.

Acid rain became a regional problem, both in the eastern United States and Europe. Our power plants were forced to shift to low-sulfur coals and to capture the sulfates with scrubbers. Environmentalists and academics predicted horrible things would happen to extensive forests, but a comprehensive review published in 2004 in the journal Environmental Science and Policy concluded that “(f)ortunately, the dramatic forest dieback feared by some scientists in the 1980s never materialized.”

In fact, it was ultimately discovered that in general (there are exceptions in the highly polluted east), European forests grew more luxuriously, thanks to fertilization from nitrogen compounds emitted during coal combustion.

Over time, the scope of environmental concerns spawned by the first Earth Day grew increasingly large, culminating with global warming. EPA's reach increased proportionately, justified by the 2007 Supreme Court decision in Massachusetts v. EPA that granted the agency the power to regulate carbon dioxide if it deemed the gas “endangered” human health and welfare. EPA issued its official finding of endangerment in 2009.

EPA's sole metric to determine future endangerment consists of complicated computer models for future climate. Anyone who is watching the coronavirus saga (and who isn't?) knows that future prospects are completely dependent upon very fuzzy and plastic assumptions. How effectively would people “socially isolate”? No one really knows. How many “silent” cases are out



By PATRICK J. MICHAELS
InsideSources.com

Patrick J. Michaels is with the Competitive Enterprise Institute and is author of *Scientocracy: The Tangled Web of Public Science and Public Policy*. He wrote this for InsideSources.com.

there contributing to an undetected herd immunity?

Ditto.

It's now known that the climate models are “with one notable exception” totally incapable of modeling the three-dimensional structure of climate change in the Earth's vast tropics. The one model that works predicts less warming than any other, a warming so modest that it can't justify “endangerment.”

It's also recently been found that dreaded sea-level rise on the East Coast is pretty much the same as it is now as it was some three centuries ago, or long before the Industrial Revolution and the initiation of our ability to significantly modify the global atmosphere. And it is also now clear from satellite data that our planet is rapidly becoming greener, thanks to the fertilizing effects of increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide. The effect about 10 times larger than we see from the increasing nitrogen deposition noted above.

In observation of the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and the subsequent founding of the EPA, it would be great if the agency “for once” ate some humble pie and reversed its finding of human endangerment from carbon dioxide. That would really be cause for an Earth Day celebration!

SENATOR

From Page 8

blinking moment—and said we have to do better with the Earth.”

Whether there will be real, lasting changes from the coronavirus crisis depends a lot on the coming presidential election, he said. Brinkley hopes that a new president will take office, and that the U.S. will take on “the big problems”—climate change, pandemics and health care for all.

No matter who wins the election, though, he believes there will be a bipartisan effort to fund the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and perhaps the Army Corps of Engineers will turn away from damming rivers toward building hospitals.

“We are not going to be caught short again without masks and gowns and ventilators,” he predicted.

But who knows how long those efforts, and those changes will last?

“Memories,” he said, “are very short.”

general public have begun to see our challenge through this lens. Groups like the Sunrise Movement have framed the issue through a much-needed social justice viewpoint and helped give birth to a new movement that views the environment, the economy, and a socially just world as inextricably linked.

What gives me hope? I reflect on Rosa Parks' single word of

defiance: “No.” Or Greta Thunberg's simple lonely act of protest in front of the Swedish parliament.

Surely, they could have never dreamed that these simple acts of principle and conscience would change the course of history, just as my father could not have imagined that Earth Day would advance the modern environmental movement in the manner that it did.

What matters, what we desperately need now, is a conversation about how we can move forward, with the social will and political capital necessary to build a brighter future.

EARTH

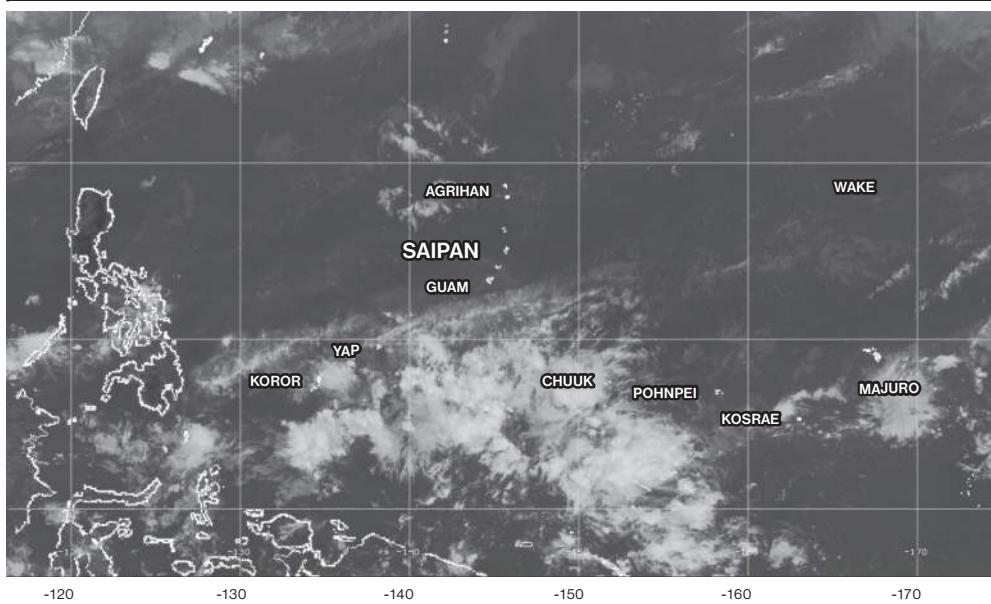
From Page 8

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
89°	77°	89°	77°	88°
77°	88°	77°	88°	77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:45 AM, TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate easterly trades and isolated showers prevail this morning. A weak trade-wind disturbance is centered about 200 miles east of Guam's coastal waters. Most showers are south of Tinian and Saipan. Combined seas are 5 to 6 feet according to Ipan/Tanapag buoys.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING AS OF APRIL 16, 2020



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
• Cashier & Customer Service
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-4282
Pay bills online at www.cucgov.org or via phone by calling toll free 1-(855)-729-2228



Department of Public Works
• Solid Waste Management Division
o Lower Base Transfer Station & Marpi Landfill
Open all week except Wednesday
7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Tel: (670) 322-2745



Department of Finance
• Division of Revenue & Taxation
CASHIER ONLY
Monday - Friday
7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Tel: (670) 664-1000



CNMI State Medicaid Agency
Eligibility staff via phone only
Tuesday - Thursday from 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 664-4880/4882
Accepting applications and supporting documents via drop-box at Medicaid Office.
Medicaid application & renewal/redetermination forms must be original.
Applications/forms available for pick up next to the drop-box or online at: www.medicaid.cnmi.mp



Division of Customs Services
o Airport: OPEN DAILY
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
o Seaport: Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
o Chalan Kanoa Post Office:
Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM
Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM



Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
• Available via phone or email only on Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Tel: (670) 322-6537/38
Email: maryann@ovrgov.net



Department of Public Lands
• CASHIER ONLY
Monday - Thursday
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Tel: (670) 234-3751/52/53/54



Office of the Attorney General
• Civil & Criminal Divisions
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Tel: (670) 237-7500/7600



Saipan Zoning Office
• Available via phone only
Monday - Thursday
7:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Tel: (670) 234-9661/2/3
Email: yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp
Call or email for more information



Office of the Public Defender
• Monday - Friday
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Tel: (670) 234-6503

MICRONESIA		
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	87° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	87° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:58 AM	6:32 PM
Thursday	5:57 AM	6:32 PM
Friday	5:57 AM	6:33 PM
Saturday	5:56 AM	6:33 PM
Sunday	5:56 AM	6:33 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	5:27 AM	5:55 PM	-
Thursday	6:02 AM	6:42 PM	-
Friday	6:39 AM	7:30 PM	-
Saturday	7:19 AM	8:21 PM	-
Sunday	8:01 AM	9:13 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		
Auckland	Showers	66° / 57°
Beijing	Sunny	66° / 39°
Hong Kong	Showers	73° / 64°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	84° / 72°
London	Mostly Sunny	66° / 46°
Los Angeles	Sunny	85° / 66°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	97° / 81°
Melbourne	Showers	72° / 57°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	84° / 77°
New York	Sunny	54° / 40°
Osaka	Rain	66° / 55°
Paris	Sunny	73° / 52°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	59° / 45°
Rome	Rain	63° / 52°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	75° / 58°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	63° / 54°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	54° / 37°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	61° / 48°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	61° / 47°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET	
1:20 AM	LOW TIDE
7:12 AM	HIGH TIDE
1:49 PM	LOW TIDE
7:56 PM	HIGH TIDE

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NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

GOVERNMENT RESOURCE LISTING AS OF APRIL 16, 2020

Department of Community and Cultural Affairs

- **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**
Accepting Calls From Existing Customers Only
Tel: (670) 287-1475
- **Division of Youth Services (DYS) On-Call**
Saipan: (670) 285-2780 / 287-2781 / 287-1773
Tinian: (670) 287-3268
Rota: (670) 287-2553
- **Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)**
For inquiries regarding parent eligibility requirements for CCDF Program:
Tel: (670) 783-8571 / (670) 783-8572
Email: dcacguerrero@gmail.com / ccdf.jrosario@gmail.com
- **Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture (CCAC)**
For Recovery Arts Grant Application Submissions.
Grant Guidelines are available at <http://www.cnmiarts council.org>
Tel.: (670) 287-4585
Email: parkeryobei@gmail.com
- **Historic Preservation Office (HPO)**
For Processing of Federal 106 Consultations Call
Tel: (670) 789-1986
Email: rchong.cnmihpo@gmail.com

SOCIAL DISTANCING TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT ALL OFFICES

GOVERNOR'S COVID-19 TASK FORCE HOTLINE TEL: (670) 287-0046

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Business

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrera@saipan.com
CORRESPONDENT

With its crunchy skin, less grease, burst of spices, and combination of sweet and saltiness in every bite and best paired with rice, salad, or beer, Korean fried chicken would be in anybody's top 10 list of favorite dishes.

If you are craving for one right now, Thunder Chicken located on Middle Road is open and ready to serve; albeit for take-out only in accordance with government measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the CNMI.

Thunder Chicken opened on Saipan in May 2018. They specialize on chicken as they are a franchise-holder of a restaurant in Korea.

"We have and serve seven kinds of fried chicken—sweet and sour, sweet and spicy, sweet soy sauce, sweet garlic sauce, onion, chili, and padak chicken dishes. A certified crowd-favorite because of the right balance of flavors is our padak chicken topped with thinly sliced green onions paired with a delicious sauce," Thunder Chicken's general manager said.

"Customers can order half and half of any flavor or order just half if they want. We have many kinds of sauces for all the chicken dishes. We import the sauces from our main franchise restaurant in



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Thunder Chicken is open daily for take-out from 11:30am to 6:30pm and is located along Middle Road.

Authentic Korean fried chicken at Thunder Chicken

Korea so we retain that authentic Korean fried chicken taste anytime. As for side dishes we have salad, pickle, and radish," he added.

Like other restaurants, Thunder Chicken does take-

out only and customers are assured they follow safety and health procedures. "We prepare the chicken in our own take-out box that we import from Korea. These boxes also ensure that when customers

get home after they pick up food, the dish is still fresh, warm, and the crunchiness of the chicken skin is still there," general manager said.

Thunder Chicken is open

Monday to Sunday from 11:30am to 6:30pm for take-out. For more information, call (670) 235-9241 or visit their Facebook page: Thunder Chicken

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Thunder Chicken serves authentic Korean fried chicken guaranteed to have crispy skin and tender juicy meat.

Oil price goes negative as demand collapses; stocks dip

BANGKOK (AP)—Asian shares skidded on Tuesday after U.S. oil futures plunged below zero as storage for crude runs close to full amid a worldwide glut as demand collapses due to the pandemic.

Shares fell in Tokyo, Hong Kong and Shanghai but New York stock futures edged higher after the S&P 500 sank 1.8% overnight, giving up some big gains from last week.

In a stunning development, the cost to have a barrel of U.S. crude delivered in May plummeted to negative \$37.63. It was at roughly \$60 at the start of the year.

Traders are still paying more than \$20 for a barrel of U.S. oil to be delivered in June, which analysts consider to be closer to the "true" price of oil. Crude to be delivered next month, meanwhile, is running up against a stark problem: traders are running out of

places to keep it, as factories, automobiles and airplanes sit idled around the world.

"We could merely be in the eye of the hurricane as the epicenters of its rage remain centered around demand devastation and crude oil oversupply," Stephen Innes of AxiCorp. said in a commentary.

"At a minimum, oil prices will be the last asset class to recover from lockdown. End transport demand will only occur in the final stages of re-opening when border crossing is allowed, and travel restrictions get lifted," he said.

Tanks at a key energy hub in Oklahoma could hit their limits within three weeks, according to Chris Midgley, head of analytics at S&P Global Platts.

Because of that, traders are willing to pay others to take that oil for delivery in May off their hands, so long as they also take the burden of figuring

out where to keep it.

"Almost by definition, crude oil has never fallen more than 100%, which is what happened today," said Dave Ernsberger, global head of pricing and market insight at S&P Global Platts.

"I don't think any of us can really believe what we saw today," he said. "This kind of rewrites the economics of oil trading."

Few traders are buying and selling U.S. oil to be delivered in May. When trading contracts for it expire on Tuesday, the earliest delivery they'll be able to buy is for June.

Brent crude, the international standard, fell nearly 9% on Monday to \$25.57 per barrel.

Early Tuesday, U.S. crude for June delivery had gained \$1.24 to \$21.67 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude, the standard for international oil pricing, had edged 3 cents higher, to \$25.67.

US pork farmers panic as virus ruins hopes for great year

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—

After enduring extended trade disputes and worker shortages, U.S. hog farmers were poised to finally hit it big this year with expectations of climbing prices amid soaring domestic and foreign demand.

Instead, restaurant closures due to the coronavirus have contributed to an estimated \$5 billion in losses for the industry, and almost overnight millions of hogs stacking up on farms now have little value. Some farmers have resorted to killing piglets because plunging sales mean there is no room to hold additional animals in increasingly cramped conditions.

"One producer described it to me the other day as a snowball rolling downhill, and every additional disruption that we have just kind of adds to that and how fast and how big it's going to be when it finally hits," said Mike Paustian, who farms 2,400 acres of corn and

soybeans and sells 28,000 pigs a year near the small eastern Iowa community of Walcott.

COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, has created problems for all meat producers, but pork farmers have been hit especially hard.

They entered this spring in shaky financial condition because tariffs had drastically reduced sales to China and Mexico. Many operations have struggled to get enough workers, in part due to federal immigration policies. Then demand plunged because the virus forced the closure of restaurants, hotels and other businesses that buy about 25% of pork, including nearly three-quarters of bacon produced in the U.S.

The biggest problem could be getting worse as additional giant slaughterhouses that can process more than 20,000 hogs a day have had to close at least temporarily as the virus spreads among workers. The industry

slaughters from 10 million to 12 million pigs a month.

Whereas poultry producers can slow production by not hatching baby chicks and ranchers can keep cattle on pastures longer, pork farmers don't have good options. Hogs are raised inside barns with limited space, and it takes time to stop the birthing cycle for pigs.

"We are in crisis and need immediate government intervention to sustain a farm sector essential to the nation's food supply," said Howard Roth, a pig farmer from Wauzeka, Wisconsin, and president of the National Pork Producers Council, an industry trade group.

The group has asked the federal government to buy \$1 billion worth of pork in cold storage that had been destined for restaurants and instead give it to food banks, which have been besieged by people who have lost their jobs as much of the economy has shut down.



LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
23,650.44
-592.05
2.44%

S&P
2,823.16
-51.40
1.79%

NASDAQ
8,560.73
-89.41
1.03%

In U.S. dollar terms

EXCHANGE RATES

Australian Dollar	1.5854
British Pound	0.8061
Canadian Dollar	1.4157
Chinese Yuan	6.9565
Euro	0.9228

Hong Kong Dollar **7.7502**

Indian Rupee **76.1145**

Japanese Yen **107.4080**

Malaysian Ringgit **4.3399**

New Zealand Dollar **1.6684**

Philippine Peso **49.8070**

Russian Ruble **75.3898**

Singapore Dollar **1.4254**

South Korean Won **1204.70**

Swiss Franc **0.9704**

Taiwan Dollar **29.3597**

Thailand Baht **32.4980**

Nation

Virus aid exceeding \$450B remains stuck in negotiations

WASHINGTON (AP)—Late-stage negotiations in Washington on a new \$450 billion coronavirus aid package dragged past Monday's hoped-for deadline, but the Trump administration and key lawmakers insisted a final pact is within reach.

President Donald Trump said he expects a Senate vote "hopefully" on Tuesday.

As talks continued, the contours of the deal appear largely set. Most of the funding, some \$300 billion, would go to boost a small-business payroll loan program that's out of money. Additional help would be given to hospitals, and billions more would be spent to boost testing for the virus, a key step in building the confidence required to reopen state economies.

The emerging draft measure—originally designed by Republicans as a \$250 billion stopgap to replenish the payroll subsidies for smaller businesses—has grown into the second largest of the four coronavirus response bills so far. Democratic demands have caused the measure to balloon, though they likely will be denied the money they want to help struggling state and local governments.

The Senate met for a brief pro forma session Monday afternoon that could have provided a window to act on the upcoming measure under fast-track procedures requiring unanimous consent to advance legislation, but it wasn't ready in time.

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., set up another Senate session for Tuesday in



In this April 13, 2020, file photo President Donald Trump listens as Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin speaks about the coronavirus in the James Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House in Washington. AP

the hope that an agreement will be finished by then.

"It's now been four days since the Paycheck Protection Program ran out of money. Republicans have been trying to secure more funding for this critical program for a week and a half now," McConnell said. "Our Democratic colleagues are still prolonging their discussions with the administration, so the Senate regretfully will not be able to pass more funding for Americans' paychecks today."

The House has announced it could meet as soon as Wednesday for a vote on the pending package, according to a schedule update

from Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, D-Md. The chamber is likely to have to call lawmakers back to Washington for a vote, which will present logistical challenges.

With small-business owners reeling during a coronavirus outbreak that has shuttered much economic activity, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin—the administration's point man in the talks with Democrats—said he was hopeful of a deal that could pass Congress quickly and get the Small Business Administration program back up by midweek. But optimism regarding an immediate deal was tempered.

"I heard today from our legislative affairs team that they are hopeful we can get a deal this week," top White House adviser Kellyanne Conway said Monday on Fox News. "The secretary feels very confident. He said that yesterday that a deal is happening. Much better position than we were, say, a week ago."

The emerging accord links the administration's effort to replenish the small-business fund with Democrats' demands for more money for hospitals and virus testing. It would provide more than \$300 billion for the small-business payroll program, with \$60 billion or so set aside for commu-

nity lenders that seek to focus on underbanked neighborhoods and rural areas.

Another \$60 billion would be available for a small-business loans and grants program that has previously been aimed at helping businesses harmed by natural disasters like hurricanes. Additionally, it would bring \$75 billion for hospitals and \$25 billion for testing, according to those involved in the talks.

On a conference call Sunday afternoon that included Trump, Mnuchin and Republican senators, McConnell indicated the only remaining item for discussion involved the money for testing, accord-

ing to a Senate GOP leadership aide who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a private call. But as in the most recent \$2 trillion measure, talks instead fell into a familiar holding pattern on Monday, with new sticking points arising over hospital funding and other topics.

Democrats have been pushing to boost funding to cash-strapped states and local governments whose revenues have cratered. They had proposed \$150 billion for the effort, but GOP leaders stood hard in opposition, at least regarding the current package of COVID-19 aid.

Trump says he'll 'suspend immigration,' offers no details

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump said Monday that he will sign an executive order "to temporarily suspend immigration into the United States" because of the coronavirus.

"In light of the attack from the Invisible Enemy, as well as the need to protect the jobs of our GREAT American Citizens, I will be signing an Executive Order to temporarily suspend immigration into the United States!" Trump tweeted.

He offered no details as to what immigration programs might be affected by the order. The White House did not immediately elaborate on Trump's tweeted announcement.

Trump has taken credit for his restrictions on travel to the U.S. from China and hard-hit European countries, arguing it contributed to slowing the spread of the virus in the U.S. But he has yet to extend those restrictions to other nations now experiencing virus outbreaks.

Due to the pandemic, almost all visa processing by the State Department, including immigrant visas, has been suspended for weeks.

More than 750,000 Americans have come down with COVID-19 and more than 42,000 have died.

Georgia to reopen some businesses as early as Friday

ATLANTA (AP)—Georgia's governor announced plans Monday to restart the state's economy before the end of the week, saying many businesses that closed to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus could reopen as early as Friday.

The governor in neighboring Tennessee planned to let businesses in most of his state begin reopening as soon as next week.

Georgia's timetable, one of the most aggressive in the nation, would allow gyms, hair salons, bowling alleys and tattoo parlors to reopen as long as owners follow strict social-distancing and hygiene requirements. Elective medical procedures would also resume. By Monday, movie theaters may resume selling tickets, and restaurants limited to takeout orders could return

to limited dine-in service.

Such a swift reopening runs counter to the advice of many experts, including Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top authority on infectious diseases, who warned again Monday that resuming business too soon risked a fresh spike in infections.

Republican Gov. Brian Kemp said it was important to allow businesses that had been shut down a chance to get some revenue flowing. But he emphasized businesses would still be operating under restrictions including monitoring employee health, enhancing sanitation and separating workers.

"I think this is the right approach at the right time," Kemp said. "We're not just throwing the keys back to these business owners. We're talking about people (who

had) the government shut down their business."

Bars, live performance venues and amusement parks will remain closed.

Kemp's order overrides any attempt to impose stricter local decisions, but some local officials including Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said the governor is moving too quickly.

"It appears the governor's order supersedes anything I can do as mayor, but I still have my voice and what I will continue to do is ask Atlantans to please stay at home," Bottoms told ABC News.

"Reopen? Dangerously incompetent" is how Stacey Abrams, a Democrat who narrowly lost the 2018 governor's race to Kemp, characterized the action on Twitter.

The governor's actions line

up with the phase one of reopening seen in the guidelines issued last week by President Donald Trump's administration. Those guidelines call for 14 days of declining COVID-19 cases. Georgia on Monday had recorded six days of declining new infections according to a rolling seven-day average of state Department of Public Health figures.

If that continued through Friday, it would be 10 days. Kemp said he delayed the reopening of sit-down service in restaurants and theaters until next Monday in part because, "I also think that gives us more time to continue to flatten the curve."

But new infections and deaths are likely to continue to mount, even if at a reduced rate. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation suggests Georgia shouldn't loos-

en social distancing until June 15. Kemp argues he's still mandating social distancing even as businesses reopen.

Kemp's action comes a month after he closed many businesses and not quite three weeks after he issued a shelter-at-home order that will remain in place until April 30. Kemp said elderly and medically fragile people should continue to stay at home until May 13. Kemp's shelter-at-home order followed days of pressure from local officials, and even after he issued the order, there were clashes over keeping open beaches, lakes and state parks. Kemp says keeping those outdoor spaces open has been a success.

The governor Monday said a decline in emergency room visits by people with flu-like symptoms indicates that infections are coming down.

Asia



In this Friday, April 17, 2020, photo, medical staff test a supermarket employee who volunteered at a pop-up community COVID-19 testing station at a carpark in Christchurch, New Zealand. AP

NZ could pull off bold goal of eliminating virus

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—While most countries are working on ways to contain the coronavirus, New Zealand has set itself a much more ambitious goal: eliminating it altogether.

And experts believe the country could pull it off.

The virus “doesn’t have superpowers,” said Helen Petousis-Harris, a vaccine expert at the University of Auckland. “Once transmission is stopped, it’s gone.”

Geography has helped. If any place could be described as socially distant it would be New Zealand, surrounded by stormy seas, with Antarctica to the south. With 5 million people spread across an area the size of Britain, even the cities aren’t overly crowded.

And Prime Minister Jacinda

Ardern has taken bold steps, putting the country under a strict lockdown in late March, when only about 100 people had tested positive for the new virus. Her motto: “Go hard and go early.”

New Zealand has so far avoided a widespread outbreak, and new cases have dwindled from a peak of about 90 per day in early April to just five on Tuesday, leaving the goal tantalizingly close. Only 13 people have died so far, and Ardern has been personally briefed on each death.

“We have the opportunity to do something no other country has achieved: elimination of the virus,” Ardern told reporters last week. “But it will continue to need a team of 5 million behind it.”

Petousis-Harris said the

country had managed to avoid the confusion and half-measures that have hampered the response in many other places.

“New Zealand got everything right,” she said. “Decisive action, with strong leadership and very clear communications to everybody.”

Ardern on Monday announced the country would stay in lockdown for another week before slightly easing some work restrictions to help restart the economy. Most of the social restrictions will remain in place.

She also tried to temper expectations of her goal, saying elimination didn’t mean that new cases wouldn’t arise in the future but they would be stamped out immediately.

World

UN calls for scaling up all efforts against pandemic

UNITED NATIONS

(AP)—The U.N. General Assembly approved a resolution Monday night calling for global action to rapidly scale up development, manufacturing and access to medicine, vaccines and medical equipment to confront the new coronavirus pandemic.

The Mexican-drafted resolution requests U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to work with the World Health Organization and recommend options to ensure timely and equitable access to testing, medical supplies, drugs and future coronavirus vaccines for all in need, especially in developing countries.

It reaffirms the fundamental role of the United Nations system in coordinating the global response to control and contain the spread of COVID-19 and in supporting the 193 U.N. member states, “and in this regard acknowledges the crucial leading role played by the World Health Organization.”

U.S. President Donald Trump suspended funding to the World Health Orga-

nization earlier this month, accusing the U.N. agency of failing to stop the virus from spreading when it first surfaced in China, saying it “must be held accountable.” But the United States did not block adoption of the resolution.

Under new voting rules instituted because the General Assembly isn’t holding meetings during the pandemic, a draft resolution is circulated to member nations. If a single country objects before the deadline, the resolution is defeated. Normally, assembly resolutions are adopted by majority votes or by consensus.

General Assembly President Tijjani Muhammad-Bande sent a letter to the 193 U.N. member states Monday night saying there were no objections to the resolution.

It calls on all countries “to immediately take steps to prevent ... speculation and undue stockpiling that may hinder access to safe, effective and affordable essential medicines, vaccines, personal protective equipment and medical equipment.”

Co-sponsored by about 170 countries, the resolution also encourages all countries to work in partnership to increase research and funding for vaccines and medicine, and to strengthen international scientific cooperation to combat the coronavirus.

And it calls for stepped up coordination, including with the private sector, “towards rapid development, manufacturing and distribution of diagnostics, anti-viral medicines, personal protective equipment and vaccines.”

The resolution is the second on COVID-19 approved by the General Assembly.

On April 2, the world body approved a resolution recognizing “the unprecedented effects” of the pandemic and calling for “intensified international cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat” the virus.

The General Assembly has until noon EDT on Wednesday to consider two other draft resolutions on the coronavirus pandemic, one from Russia and the other from Saudi Arabia.

Experts: Coronavirus brings spike in anti-Semitic sentiments

TEL AVIV, Israel

(AP)—Israeli researchers reported Monday that the global coronavirus outbreak has sparked a rise in anti-Semitic expression blaming Jews for the spread of the disease and the economic recession it has caused.

The findings, which came in an annual report by Tel Aviv University researchers on anti-Semitism, show an 18% spike in attacks against Jews last year. The report warns that the pandemic has threatened to amp up incitement even more.

Although they did not include 2020 statistics, the researchers said the hatred has come from sources as varied as right-wing European politicians, ultra-conservative American pastors, anti-Zionist intellectuals and Iranian state authorities.

“Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant rise in accusations that Jews, as individuals and as a collective, are behind the spread of the virus or are directly profiting from it,” said Moshe Kantor, president of the European Jewish Congress, an umbrella group representing Jewish communities across the con-

tinent. “The language and imagery used clearly identifies a revival of the medieval ‘blood libels’ when Jews were accused of spreading disease, poisoning wells or controlling economies.”

Tel Aviv University’s Kantor Center for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry releases its report every year on the eve of Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Day, which begins Monday at sunset. Researchers said the 18% increase in anti-Semitic violence in 2019 continued a steady rise of recent years.

Seven Jews were killed in 2019 in more than 450 attacks across the globe against synagogues, community centers and other Jewish targets.

The researchers said the hateful response to the novel

coronavirus — and the COVID-19 illness it causes — was the continuation of an ancient form of anti-Semitism that involves blaming Jews when “things go wrong.”

They recorded expressions such as pinning the source of the virus on Jews rejecting Christ, to accusing Jews of perpetrating the virus’s spread in order to profit from vac-

AMID KIM JONG UN CONCERN

Seoul sees no suspicious activity in North

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The South Korean government said Tuesday no unusual activity has been detected in North Korea after unconfirmed reports described leader Kim Jong Un as in fragile condition after heart surgery.

The presidential Blue House says it had no information about the rumors on Kim’s health. Speculation often surfaces about North Korea’s leadership based on attendance at important state events. Kim, who is in his mid-30s, missed the celebration of his late grandfather and state founder Kim Il Sung on April 15, the country’s most important holiday.

Kim has not made a public appearance since presiding over a political bureau meeting of the ruling Workers’

Party on April 11, discussing preventive measures against the coronavirus and electing his sister as an alternate member of the bureau.

“We have no information to confirm regarding rumors about Chairman Kim Jong Un’s health issue that have been reported by some media outlets. Also, no unusual developments have been detected inside North Korea,” Blue House spokesman Kang Min-seok said in the statement.

A political upheaval in North Korea would be unlikely even if Kim became sidelined by health problems, according to analyst Cheong Seong-Chang at South Korea’s private Sejong Institute.

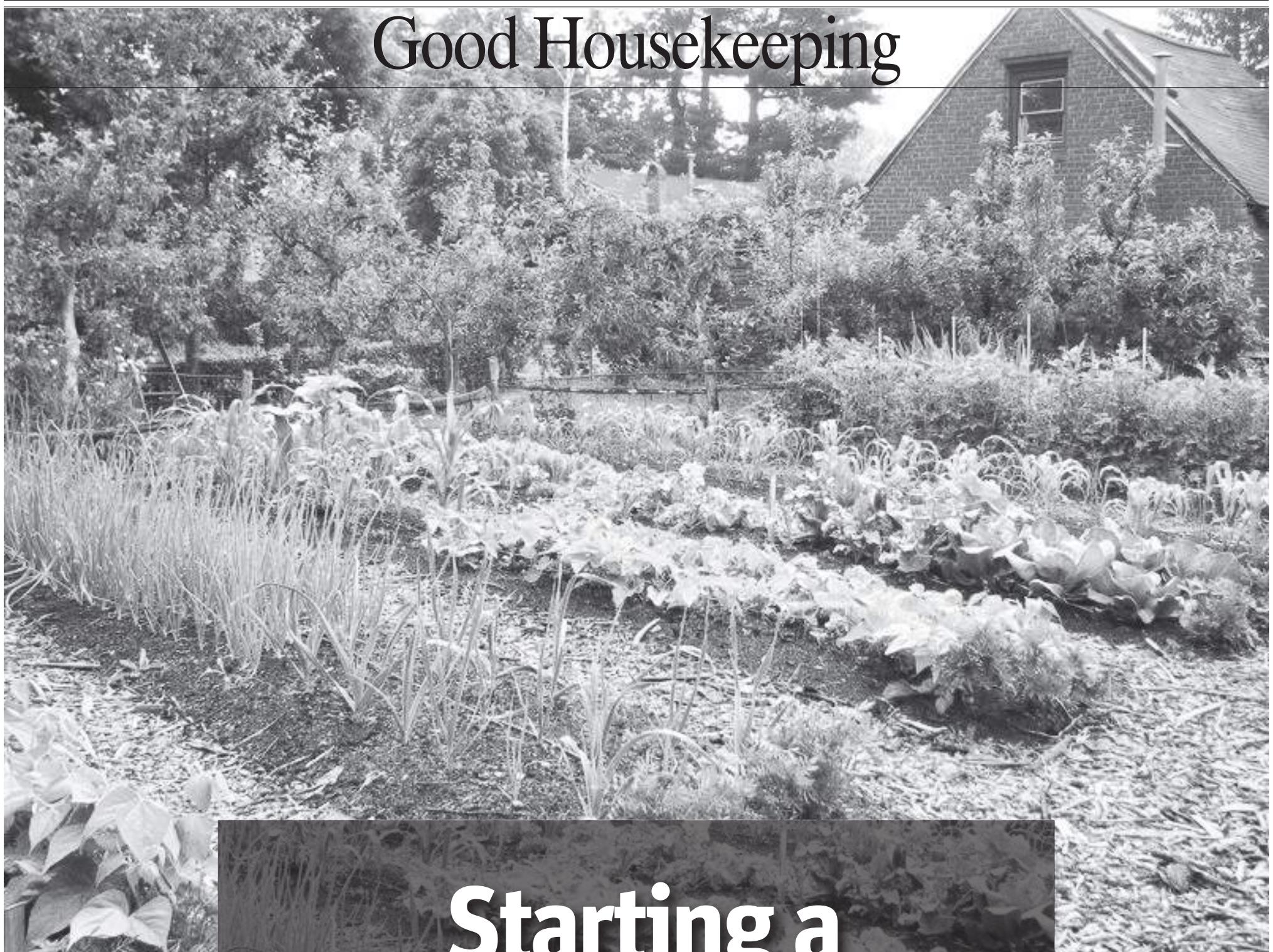
Cheong said Kim’s sister, Kim Yo Jong, is already ex-

ercising significant influence within the government and that most members of Pyongyang’s leadership share an interest with the Kim family in maintaining the North’s system.

CNN had cited an anonymous U.S. official who said Kim was in “grave danger” after an unspecified surgery. Later, another US official told the same network that the concerns about Kim’s health are credible but the severity is hard to assess.

Daily NK, an online newspaper focused on North Korea that often cites defectors or unspecified sources within North Korea, had cited anonymous sources saying Kim was recovering from heart surgery in the capital Pyongyang and that his condition was improving.

Good Housekeeping



By LEE REICH
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lots of people sheltering at home now because of the coronavirus pandemic are thinking about planting a vegetable garden. It offers more than food: Growing vegetables is a family activity, gives everyone a reason to get out in the fresh air, provides exercise and saves money.

Home-grown vegetables are delicious not only for their freshness, but also because you can choose what to grow based on flavor, rather than commercial qualities.

And growing vegetables is easy to do organically, without pesticides or even chemical fertilizers.

Some basics for getting started:

WHERE TO PLANT

The first considerations are sun and soil. Most vegetables require six or more hours daily of sunlight. Lettuce, arugula, spinach and other leafy vegetables can get by with a little less. (Other vegetables can too, but with some sacrifice of yield.)

As for soil, water drainage is the most important consid-

Starting a vegetable garden: *the basics*

eration. Don't plant where water sits for long periods after rains. Your vegetables will thrive wherever lawn grass or most garden flowers grew well.

You don't need a small farm to grow your own vegetables. A plot 15 feet on each side will yield an amazing amount of fresh vegetables (and perhaps spur you to plant more next year).

Whatever size your garden, the closer it is to your home, the more care it will receive.

No yard space in which to plant vegetables? No problem. Grow them in tubs, flowerpots or other containers. Again, drainage is important. Con-

tainers should have drainage holes in their bottoms. Fill them with potting soil, not garden soil, because it doesn't drain well within the confines of a container, even if it does so in open ground.

READYING THE GROUND

As an alternative to the traditional digging or rototilling, here's a way of clearing existing vegetation from your proposed garden site: Just cover the whole area with newspaper, four sheets thick and overlapped, or "landscape paper."

Wet the paper in either case to prevent blowing. Then mark out areas with string for 3-foot-wide beds separated by

18- to 24-inch-wide paths.

Now check with local stores or online for "compost." If your garden is going to be small, bagged compost from a garden center might be enough. Otherwise, have it delivered in bulk. What you need is enough compost to spread an inch or more deep in each designated bed, over the paper.

For the paths, all you need is any weed-free, organic material such as wood chips, wood shavings, sawdust, straw or pine needles. Lay down just enough to hide the paper.

The advantage of this non-traditional method of preparing the soil is that it's quicker,

less disruptive to soil life, and results in fewer weeds in the weeks to come.

TIMING IS IMPORTANT

Planting time depends on where you live. Find out the average date of the last killing frost in your area; you can call your county Cooperative Extension office for the date. Since we can't predict weather, we go by averages.

Vegetables can be divided into those that thrive in cooler weather and those that thrive in warmer weather. Cool-weather vegetables can be planted outdoors a few weeks before the average date of the last killing frost. Warm-weather

This undated photo shows a vegetable garden in New Paltz, N.Y. A surprisingly large amount of vegetables can be harvested from even a small vegetable garden.

AP

vegetables can be planted outdoors about a week after that last frost date.

Not to muddy the waters, but within each of these categories are vegetables whose seeds you plant directly in the garden, and those that require so long a growing season that you need to purchase transplants (seedlings) for planting. Putting all this together for some common vegetables breaks down this way:

- Cool-weather vegetables for seeding directly in the garden: lettuce, spinach, kale, arugula, peas.

- Cool-weather vegetables planted as transplants: broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts.

- Warm-weather vegetables for seeding directly in the garden: beans, corn, cucumber, okra, squash.

- Warm-weather vegetables planted as transplants: eggplant, pepper, tomato.

Now you're on your way to great-tasting vegetables, plus the other benefits afforded by a backyard vegetable garden.

Life & Style

Uffizi, accustomed to taming crowds, looks to outbreak's end

ROME (AP)—The director of Italy's Uffizi Galleries is predicting a boom in visitors after coronavirus restrictions end, judging by what happened after previous emergencies closed down one of the world's most popular museums.

Museum director Eike Schmidt recalled that after the Arno River flooded Florence in 1966 and shuttered the museum, the number of visitors to the Uffizi jumped from 1 million to 1.5 million in 1968. He said the Uffizi saw a similar attendance growth spurt after the Italian Mafia in 1993 set off a car bomb behind the museum, killing six people, damaging artworks and forcing the museum's temporary closure.

When Italy's 6-week-old lockdown eventually ends and the Uffizi reopens, Schmidt expects the initial wave of visitors to be Florentines and other Italians.

"Internal tourism will dominate in the mid-term," Schmidt, a German who is the Galleries' first non-Italian director, said. "Over the long term, I don't see a drop in interest in visiting museums," he said, speaking by video hook-



In this July 19, 2019 file photo, director of the Uffizi Gallery Eike Schmidt speaks during the unveiling ceremony of the «Vase of Flowers» painting by Jan van Huysum, at the Pitti Palace, part of the Uffizi Galleries, in Florence, Italy. AP

up with Rome-based foreign journalists on Monday.

A form of social distancing the Uffizi implemented two years ago—not to guard against viral contagion but to discourage crowds from

bunching up in front of popular masterpieces — is likely to help, he said. The museum introduced timed entrances, revised ticket prices to encourage off-season buying and revamped the placement in

gallery rooms of paintings like Botticelli's "Birth of Venus."

Italy was completing its sixth week under a nationwide lockdown Monday and has at least two more weeks to go as part of government

efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

The lockdown came as the museum's high season was beginning, although Schmidt noted that in recent years the Uffizi's greatest growth in

ticket sales has been in the off-season, when art-rich Florence is less crowded.

He estimated that the galleries lost 10 million euros (\$11 million) in revenue being closed in March and April. In 2019, the Uffizi Galleries, which include Pitti Palace and the Boboli Gardens, drew 4.5 million visitors.

Book on Chernobyl nuclear accident wins \$5,000 prize

NEW YORK (AP)—Adam Higginbotham's "Midnight in Chernobyl: The Untold Story of the World's Greatest Nuclear Disaster" has won a \$5,000 prize.

Higginbotham has received the William E. Colby Award, given for an outstanding book on military or intelligence history. The award, announced Monday, is named for the late CIA director. It's presented by Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont, and sponsored in part by the Chicago-based Pritzker Military Foundation.

The Colby award was established in 1999. Previous winners include Karl Marlantes' novel "Matterhorn" and Dexter Filkins' "The Forever War."

Colby was CIA director during the Nixon and Ford administrations.

Earlier this year, "Midnight in Chernobyl" won the American Library Association's Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction.

Wildlife photographer Peter Beard found dead near his home

NEW YORK (AP)—Artist, adventurer and celebrated wildlife photographer Peter Beard was found dead in woods near his cliff-side home at the tip of Long Island nearly a month after his family reported him missing. He was 82.

"He died where he lived: in nature," his family said in a statement posted on Beard's website Sunday night.

The Suffolk County Medical Examiner hasn't made an official identification but East Hampton Police Capt. Christopher Anderson said Monday "we're reasonably confident" it's Beard. He said the cause of death hasn't been determined but neither foul play nor suicide is suspected.

"Peter defined what it means to be open: open to new ideas, new encounters, new people, new ways of living and being," his family said in its statement. "Always insatiably curious, he pursued his passions without restraints and perceived reality through a unique lens."

Beard was renowned for

his photos of African wildlife, taken in the decades when he lived and worked at his tent camp in Kenya. His best-known work was "The End of the Game," published in 1965. It documented the beauty and romance of Africa and the tragedy of its endangered wildlife, especially the elephant.

Brain injury alters friend's personality in negative ways

DEAR ABBY: "Stella" and I have been close friends for 25 years. Two years ago, she was in a car accident and suffered a traumatic brain injury. She has since recovered and returned to work.

Stella's personality has changed a lot since the accident. Her language and clothing are inappropriate. At 65 years old, her wardrobe now consists of miniskirts, spike heels, over-the-knee lace-up boots, halter tops, etc. She says suggestive things to my boyfriend in front of me. He no longer wants to be around her. Most of Stella's friends have distanced themselves, and her husband has moved out of their home.

I remember how close we once were, and I don't want to end the friendship, but I don't think I can tolerate being around her. How can I help her and keep my sanity?

TOO MUCH CHANGE IN TEXAS

DEAR TOO MUCH: Be gentle with Stella because her change may be beyond her control. Help her by trying to talk frankly with her. Explain how much her personality and image have changed since the accident, and that some of her actions have made people so uneasy they have distanced themselves. Tell her that her comments to your boyfriend made him uncomfortable, and you need them to stop.

I can't predict how she will react, but you may get through to her. If not, she may end her friendship with you, and you can retain your sanity.

DEAR ABBY: My significant other, "Bob," and I have been together for 30 years (never married). The past 10 years of our relationship have not been so good in the bedroom.

Bob has ED and refuses to see a professional about it. He is well aware of how unfair it is to me because my sex drive is still in full swing. Would it be wrong to tell him that since he doesn't want to seek help for his problem, I am going to find a "friend with benefits"?

I have reached the point where I want to leave him. If he would get help for his problem, our relationship would improve, and I would be willing to stay.

DEPRIVED IN OHIO

DEAR DEPRIVED: Bob may be so embarrassed about his ED problem that he's afraid to have a frank talk with a doctor about it. It's a shame because in many cases there is help for it.

Because you have reached the end of your tether, discuss your feelings with him as openly as you have with me. If you do, it may jolt him into doing something for himself that he should have done a decade ago.

DEAR ABBY: My mother-in-law passed away a year ago. Since then, my husband and his sister have been letting my father-in-law stay with each of us on different nights. He's with us every Friday and Tuesday and with my husband's sister

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



Thursday, Saturday and Sunday.

My father-in-law is healthy and capable of doing everything for himself. I am getting SO tired of this arrangement! It is cramping my life in a big way. What do I do?

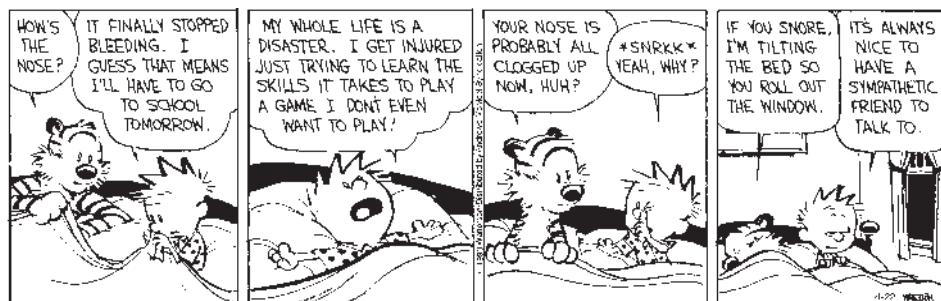
RUINING MY LIFE IN THE SOUTH

DEAR RUINING: Start making plans for yourself on Friday and Tuesday nights so you will feel less encroached-upon. And introduce your father-in-law to some ladies his age — providing he is willing. (Men in his demographic are a hot commodity, and I'm betting that he will be willing.)

Good advice for everyone — teens to seniors — is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes



By Bill Waterson

Garfield®



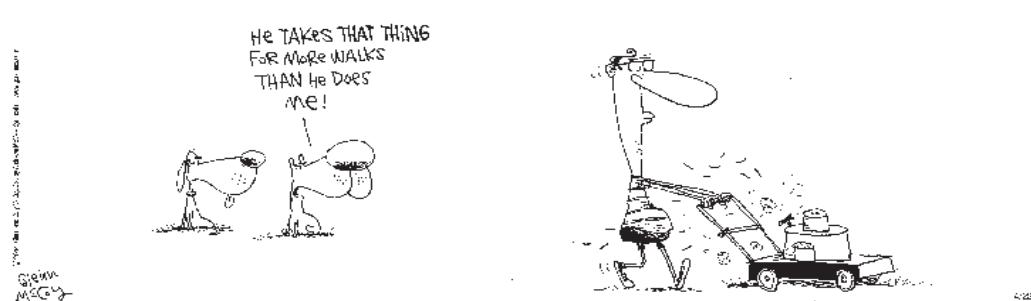
By Jim Davis

Adam@home



By Bryan Basset

The Duplex



By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	27	ICU	DOWN	14	Lopsided
1	Serena,	hookups	1	"The	win
to Venus	28	Nick	Nutcracker	15	Map
4	Unpaid	of	—	—	lines
TV spot	Time"	2	Foot	(Abbr.)	
7	Cousin's	singer	fraction	19	Ann
mom	Bonnie	3	Church	Patchett's	
8	"Skyfall"	30	Billboards	topper	"—Canto'
actress	Judi	33	Home-	4	Little, in
10	Author	Judi	land	Arles	20
Walker	36	Comment	5	Hose	Snitch
11	And	37	Odor	woes	21
others, in	detectors	38	Extinct	6	Enjoy
Latin	birds	39	Monopoly	Rights	22
13	Male role	40	card	org.	On the
models	models	Away	8	Post-	stock
16	Dead	from	9	pone	exchange
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17	Well-	10	Astern	staffers	Attend
versed	folks?	41	Carte	12	Capitol
18	Superla-	lead-in	Fable	writer	feature
tive suffix	tive		13	25	Morrison
19	Fuzzy		14	Monopoly	of The
image	image		15	8	Doors
20	Antique		16	Post-	26
cars	cars		17	pone	Clock
21	Winter		18	9	sounds
forecast	forecast		19	10	Peruses
23	Clutch		20	11	29
25	Hoosegow		21	12	Cupid's
26	Horn		22	13	missile
sound	sound		23	14	30
			24	15	Confused
			25	16	31
			26	17	Historic
			27	18	Scott
			28	19	32
			29	20	Method
			30	21	(Abbr.)
			31	22	34
			32	23	Med.
			33	24	plan
			34	25	options
			35	26	35
				27	Yuletide
				28	tune

Solution time: 23 mins.



For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5956 99¢ per minute, touchtone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

STUMPED?

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Amber Heard, 34; Sherri Shepherd, 53; Jeffrey Dean Morgan, 54; Jack Nicholson, 83.

Happy Birthday: Make a decision, and follow through with your plans. If you stop prematurely or change direction abruptly, you will end up having to backtrack this year. Refuse to let a stubborn attitude take over or come between you and the success you desire. Keep your life simple, doable and without conflict, and you will bring about positive change. Your numbers are 2, 14, 20, 28, 31, 43, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Organize your day, and leave no room for error. Precision will be your ticket to success. Physical activity will help ease stress and clear your mind. Sign up for what's affordable, engaging and has the potential to transform into something lucrative or empowering. ☀️☀️

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): A change may be overdue, but don't do something unnecessary. Stick to a plan that is user-friendly, affordable and without conflict. Don't pull the plug on your current position or partnership before you have an alternative in place. ☀️☀️

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Pay attention to the way you look. Your appearance will make a difference in the way people treat you. A refined, classic image will attract people who want to contribute, not take advantage of you and what you are trying to accomplish. ☀️☀️

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Say less and do more. Refuse to get into a debate with someone who will never see things your way. Don't waste time when you should

be working toward something that will improve your life. A change is long overdue. ☀️☀️

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Stop worrying about what everyone is doing, and focus on your responsibilities. Be aware of any regulations that could alter your course of action before you get involved in something apt to change your life. Romantic opportunities are prevalent. ☀️☀️☀️

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): A change that doesn't go over budget will give you the boost you need to take on a new challenge. An unexpected opening will turn out not to be as favorable as anticipated. If there are too many stipulations, walk away. ☀️☀️

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't fold under pressure. Be smart about the promises you make. Pay more attention to someone you love or want to collaborate with moving forward. A personal pick-me-up will lift your spirits and encourage you to be increasingly active. ☀️☀️

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Take the plunge, and do something meaningful. Alter your space to make it easier to take on a new endeavor. Using the skills that bring you the most joy will encourage you to head into unfamiliar territory. ☀️☀️

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Make plans with someone who shares your interests and desire for adventure. Someone who depends on you should be taken care of first. Having a clear conscience will ensure you enjoy whatever you pursue. Romance is in the stars. ☀️☀️

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Lend a helping hand. The time you offer others is not a waste. You will make a connection that can be helpful to you in the future. Keep your spending down and your focus on better health. ☀️☀️

Birthday Baby: You are quick, stubborn and particular. You are competitive and persistent.

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EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD
IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Go about your business. Don't get in to emotional conversations. If change is required, keep it simple as well as budget-friendly. Home improvements should make your life easier. Don't complicate your life unnecessarily. Leave the past behind you. ☀️☀️

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Stick to what you know and do best. Honing your skills and taking care of unfinished business will put you in a good position. A job you can do from home looks promising. Make plans to spend time with someone you love. ☀️☀️

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Lend a helping hand. The time you offer others is not a waste. You will make a connection that can be helpful to you in the future. Keep your spending down and your focus on better health. ☀️☀️

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

8	3			1	4		
5		8		1			7
9		4	3			8	
1		2	7			6	
7	4	1		8	2	3	
		3				4	
		9				1	
8	6	4				5	
2	5			4	6		

Difficulty Level ★★★

Yesterday's Answer

7	1	4	5	2	8	6	3	9
6	2	9	3	4	1	5	8	7
8	3	5	9	7	6	1	4	2
3	8	7	1	9	2	4	5	6
5	6	2	4	8	7	9	1	3
4	9	1	6	5	3	7	2	8
9	7	8	2	1	5	3	6	4
1	4	3	8	6	9	2	7	5
2	5	6	7	3	4	8	9	1

Daily Daily Level ★★

WONDERWORD

By

Jordan ‘axed’ McGrady-Pippen swap



NEW YORK (AP)—Close your eyes and picture it: Michael Jordan and a young Tracy McGrady running the wing together, donned in Bulls red.

Apparently, that fantasy isn't as far-fetched as it might seem.

With the recent release of “The Last Dance” on Michael Jordan and the 1998 Bulls, an old clip from ESPN’s “The Jump” resurfaced, in which McGrady describes a plot by Bulls general manager Jerry Krause to flip Scottie Pippen for him at the 1997 NBA Draft.

“What a lot of people don't know about that night is that Jerry Krause was actually trying to make a trade for me with Scottie Pippen in it,” McGrady said, to the shock of Rachel Nichols and Ramona Shelburne. “And Michael Jordan axed that whole deal.”

Asked if he knew about that potential trade in the moment, McGrady said yes, even admitting that Krause hosted him for a secret meeting in advance of the draft to talk details.

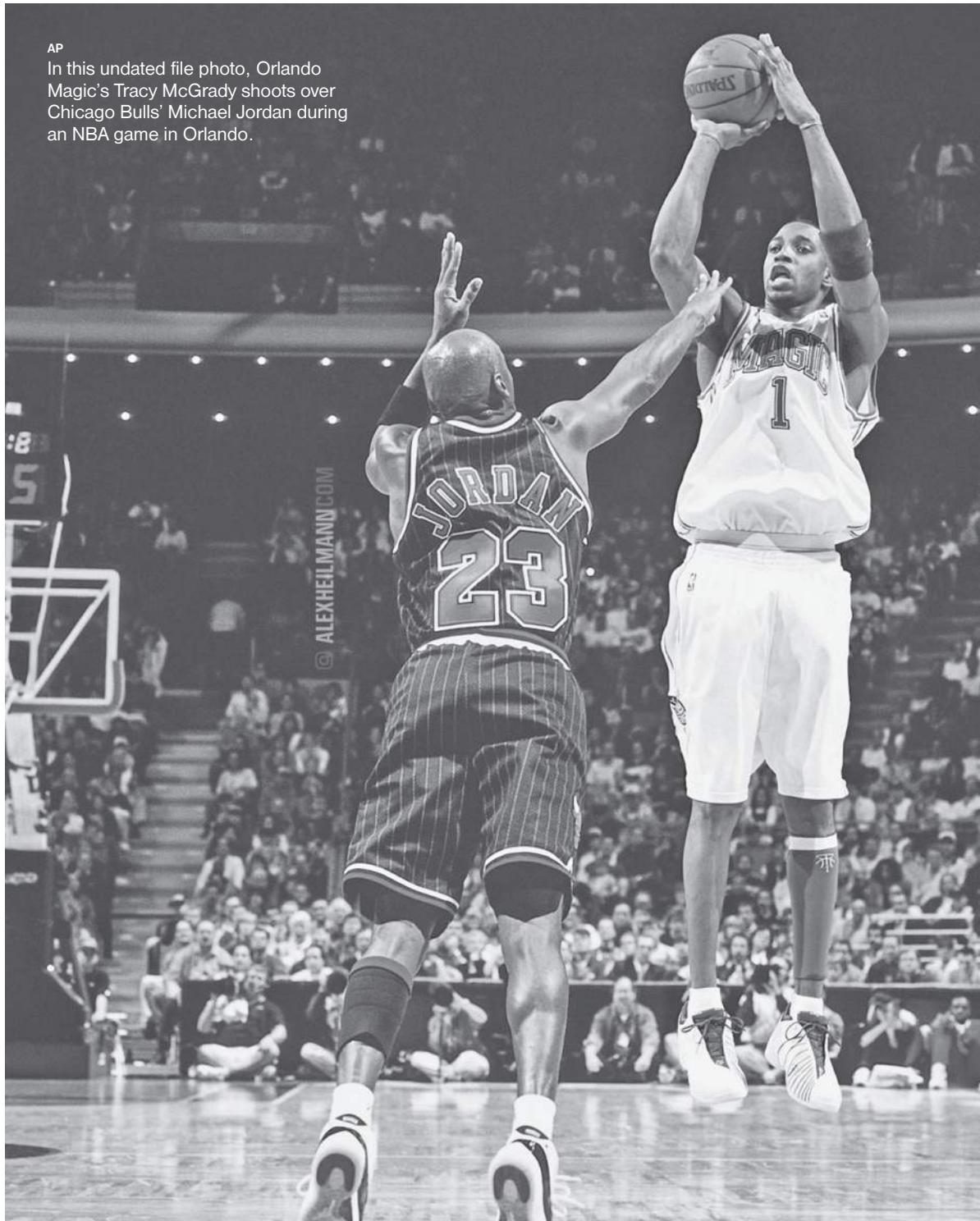
“It was a couple days before the draft,” McGrady told Nichols of the meeting. “It was all secret, it was all secretive, and it didn't get out... I'm 18 years old and I think I'm about to get traded to Chicago to play with Michael Jordan?”

“But Mike wasn't having that.”

A central point of conflict in the first two episodes of “The Last Dance” has been Krause's desire to set the Bulls up for a fruitful rebuild before the dynasty had naturally concluded. Folded into that is a palpable tension between Krause and Pippen, who was frustrated with being notably undercompensated but who Krause deemed on the downswing of his career. By the conclusion of Episode 2, Pippen had gone full tilt with

AP

In this undated file photo, Orlando Magic's Tracy McGrady shoots over Chicago Bulls' Michael Jordan during an NBA game in Orlando.



ALEXHEILMANN.COM

a public trade demand and openly berated Krause on the team bus.

Apparently, Krause almost granted Pippen's wish months in advance. But luckily, it didn't come to pass. Though the infusion of McGrady would have jump-started that aforementioned rebuild, it would have come at the cost of a special 1997-98 season, which we now all get to relive.

Record rating

The opening episodes of ESPN's much-anticipated 10-part series on Jordan were the most-watched documentary programs in the network's history.

Nielsen data showed the first two hours of the series airing Sunday averaged 6.1 million viewers. The previous record holder, “You Don't Know Bo,” about baseball and football star Bo Jackson, was watched by 3.6 million viewers in 2012. The audience counts TV viewers only and does not include streaming platforms.

ESPN simulcast “The Last Dance” over two channels, with one version on ESPN 2 presented without the vulgarities used in the candid interviews with Jordan and other participants.

“The Last Dance” uses never-before-seen footage shot by a camera crew embedded with the Chicago Bulls for the 1997-98 NBA championship season—the sixth and final of the team's stunning 1990s run—to the tell story of Jordan's extraordinary career.

The highly touted project, directed by Jason Hehir, was scheduled to air in June. But with nearly every live sporting event wiped out by the shutdown rules imposed to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, ESPN moved up the launch date. The network has treated the series as if it were a live event, with discussions of the film on its editions of “SportsCenter.”

When T.O. Souryal heard the PGA Tour planned to resume its season in June, the former Dallas Mavericks team physician didn't think it sounded far-fetched.

Following social-distancing guidelines on a sprawling golf course, without spectators, seemed feasible. A positive test for the novel coronavirus might derail a player's season, but not the tour's schedule.

But restarting the NBA's 2020 season? Souryal's experience, during 27 years as the Mavericks' doctor and two terms as president of the league's association of team physicians, taught him that would be a complex undertaking. The path to a resumed season remains fraught with uncertainty, including what he calls “the \$64-billion question.”

“What do we do if we come back and a player tests positive?” said Souryal, the medical director at a Texas sports medicine clinic. “Until they have an answer for that, I don't see the NBA or hockey or any

Resumption of NBA relies on protocols not yet available

other close-quarter team sport coming back anytime soon.”

Since suspending its season March 11 following a positive test by Utah center Rudy Gobert, the NBA has canvassed a former United States surgeon general, public health officials and team doctors, athletic trainers and performance coaches to understand how to get players, coaches and staffers back on the job safely, and to keep them that way.

Five weeks of discussions have yielded few answers and left the league, as well as the country, grappling with how to reopen. Commissioner Adam Silver has said the NBA is still not ready to make decisions about the 2020 season, and that a resumption would hinge on such factors as the availability of wide-scale testing, antibody therapy and vaccination.

“What most people don't understand about a team sport is that it's not just the 15 contract players, it's not just the

53 NFL roster players; it's the coaches, it's the trainers, it's the nutritionist, it's the strength and conditioning, it's the ball boys,” Souryal said. “It's essentially a little city, and that little city leaves a great deal of risk if any one of those people gets infected. Because that little city, that little community, lives in very close quarters.

“If one of those people tests positive, of course you're going to quarantine that person, but what about everybody that has come in contact with that person? I don't know that the NBA, or any other league, has an answer to that question. And I believe that question will remain a question until we have a vaccine or a pill.”

Such treatments appear to be several months away, Souryal said, in a best-case scenario. In the interim, some leagues have found ways to operate using strict measures to ensure players have not contracted the virus. Multiple

daily temperature checks and gobs of hand sanitizer have become the norm for baseball players in Taiwan, which played its first games last week in empty stadiums.

That league has five teams; the NBA has 30, with each still having 15-18 games left on its regular-season schedule. Going straight into the playoffs would leave 16.

“Everybody is going to be nervous and scared and part of the problem is, throughout the 50 states, everybody's at different stages” of the coronavirus spread, said an athletic trainer employed by an NBA team who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly. “When can we get to this kind of position to actually play a game? That's the first step. Then, what do we have in place? Rapid testing is just one of them. What if someone gets sick? Is there medication that's going to work, that if someone does get

ill that they could get on?

“If one of us, if we're around a family member, one of us ends up having COVID, then you get isolated from the rest of your family and you hope they don't get it. It's going to be the same thing. ... You're talking about at that point, do you shut down a team?”

Major League Baseball has considered shuttling teams between quarantined hotels and spectator-free stadiums in Arizona, and the NBA has listened to single-location proposals, too.

“This concept falls apart when the bus driver driving the bus from the airport to the hotel is positive [for coronavirus],” Souryal said. “The only way is to ensure all of those people are negative and then to keep them sequestered from any other people. There is not a foolproof way to do this.”

Lawrence Frank, the Clippers' president of basketball operations, said the rapid test-

ing of players would represent a “huge boost,” according to experts. So would a test to learn which players possess the antibodies to fight the virus.

How quickly NBA teams would be able to act on these types of advances remains unknown; testing capacity continues to lag across the country. Backlash broadsided the league in March after eight teams secured testing for coronavirus at a time of nationwide shortages.

Georges Benjamin, the executive director of the American Public Health Assn., said the NBA would “have to avoid at all costs” the optics of reserving an untold number of tests, and the personal protective equipment and medical professionals to conduct them, if such resources are not yet widely available.

“Whatever they do, they have to have a plan and look at what is happening in the rest of the world,” Benjamin said. “I'm sure most of the players believe they have a community obligation to protect the community.”

NFL braces for glitches with digital draft



NEW YORK—

If there's anything the NFL has learned over the past month, it's that technology is only as perfect as the people who are in charge of it. That probably explains why the Cincinnati Bengals might have been a tad touchy about Monday's reported "practice draft" malfunction, which left some of the league's decision-makers sitting in silent frustration when a technology snafu triggered a nearly three-minute delay at the start of the league's first virtual test run.

"It wasn't [a Bengals] problem," a source said. "That should be clear. It was on [the league's] end."

The need for that clarity has an undertone to it. For some of the franchises involved in this week's draft, it's clear that there are two chief concerns when this thing rolls out. First, teams don't want their technology to compromise their ability to pick or trade; and second, no one wants to be the team that blows a digital tire in the middle of the draft and then holds up the entire affair, all while the world watches.

The opening pick in Monday's virtual run was a prime example of that, with the NFL stumbling over the first and easiest selection of the draft. A mistake that set off some pre-loaded eye-rolls from some front offices that think this entire virtual setup is rushed and ill-conceived.

"Not going to be a very patient bunch," a general manager said after Monday's practice run. "It took a little bit to get things moving but then it was OK. ... Someone will have a problem. There's too many teams [and] too many picks to



The Cincinnati Bengals will choose first in the NFL draft and are expected to take Heisman Trophy winner and LSU quarterback Joe Burrow, left.

AP

not have something happen."

Security center

For its part, the NFL is doing everything it can to minimize that margin of error. Whether it's the multitude of avenues to get a pick or trade in to the league office allowing breathing room in the face of technological failure, a litany of scenarios have gotten trouble-shooting from the NFL's IT department over the past week. That has included pressing issues of online security for teams, players and the league, leading to the formation of an "NFL Global

Security Operations Center" to help with any threats to the virtual process. Those potential issues include some of the social media chaos that rocked the draft in recent years, from the Laremy Tunsil gas mask incident to hacked feeds to extortion attempts tied to social media releases either before or during the selection process.

The league is still bracing for the likelihood that Thursday's first round will present a problem or two that can't be seen now. And the hope is that everyone can learn on the fly between Rounds 1 and 2, hemming up unforeseen problems

during the overnight break, while also hoping that any logistical problems in the opening round weren't painfully obvious to the audience tuning in.

In some ways, this draft will illustrate the NFL climbing another rung of the technology ladder. Draft boards have gone from magnetic boards to password protected digital versions on internal servers. For most franchises, a team's cloud server is now the central hub of basically every single tool used for evaluation — college and practice film, scouting reports, analytics data and warehoused inter-

view videos from the scouting combine.

Efficiency

For a while, it has been apparent that NFL teams can do a lot of work without being on site for some of the age-old staples of a season. It's why we saw more teams leave scouts home for the combine this year and some key decision-makers skip large portions of the event. A few months ago, it was painted as a problem with how the league had changed the event's interview schedule. Now, some teams are admitting that the work can be more efficient and cheaper when it's done from afar.

"I did my entire combine [work] in basically one or two days off the cloud," one scout said. "It was a lot more efficient. Normally I'd be gone for more than a week. From a time standpoint, it wasn't even close."

In March, another scout said, "I'm already done with this year's [evaluation] for this draft and I'm starting on next year. It's not even due until like June, but I can probably be done with it in about a week of work."

Undoubtedly, part of the efficiency is related to the coronavirus pandemic. With the cancellation of pro days and visits, there was less work to do on late-round or small school prospects, leaving evaluators to drill down and quickly exhaust all the information at hand. That's also part of what irritated some general managers, who believed pushing the draft out further would give teams more

time to scrape up additional information and put it to use rather than just living with what they had compiled into mid-March.

Even for the grousing, there have been some revelations from the national shutdown, too. One general manager who has a long history of being a "boots on the ground" evaluator said that all of the Zoom meetings with prospects opened his eyes to some flexibility with his time.

"I don't think I'll be at the combine more than a day or two ever again," he said. "All the prospect interviews [at the combine] are important, but we can just set it up so I can watch those online the way I do now. We'll still have people in the room with [the prospects] in Indianapolis, but I don't have to be there. I can be there on a Zoom connection or whatever. That's going to give me a lot of time to stay back [at the facility] and work on some other things here."

Asked about the lost time with agents and other general managers at the combine—which is where free agent contracts or trades can be engineered—he pointed directly at how the pandemic has changed his thinking.

"I've realized all of that can be done over the phone or even on Zoom," he said. "It's what we're doing right now, so what's the difference? Now I know we can do it, so why not use that to our advantage and then take my time and use it elsewhere? I'm serious. I don't think I'll do the combine the same way ever again."

Japan scientist 'very pessimistic' Olympics will happen

TOKYO (AP)—A Japanese professor of infectious disease says he is "very pessimistic" the postponed Tokyo Olympics can open in 15 months.

"To be honest with you, I don't think the Olympics is likely to be held next year," Kentaro Iwata, a professor of infectious disease at Kobe University, said Monday speaking in English on a teleconference. "Holding the Olympics needs two conditions; one, controlling COVID-19 in Japan, and controlling COVID-19 everywhere."

Toshiro Muto, the CEO of the Tokyo organizing committee, expressed his own reservations 10 days ago. Since then, the organizing committee and the International Olympic Committee have said there is no Plan B"other

than working for the Olympics to open on July 23, 2021.

"I am very pessimistic about holding the Olympic Games next summer unless you hold the Olympic Games in a totally different structure such as no audience, or a very limited participation," Iwata said, speaking at a forum arranged by the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan in Tokyo.

You have to invite so many athletes from many, many places, which is not very compatible with this COVID-19 infection that is causing a pandemic. Japan might be able to control this disease by next summer. And I wish we could. But I don't think that will happen everywhere on earth."



Japan was spared during the initial stage of the coronavirus outbreak. But cases are now spiking, particularly in Tokyo and other large cities. As of Monday, there were

about 12,000 detected infections in Japan and about 250 deaths.

Devi Sridhar, professor of Global Health at the University of Edinburgh, said holding the Olympics may hinge on finding a vaccine.

"I think it all depends on whether we have a vaccine," Sridhar said late last week. "And so I think if you talk to some of the scientists, they're saying we'll have a vaccine by the fall and we can manufacture it quickly and we can get it out to people. If we do, then I'd say, actually, we

have a great chance of going ahead with the Olympics."

Sridhar said without a vaccine, the Olympics in 2021 were unlikely. This could also apply to the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, which are to open in China in February—just six months after the Summer Games are to close.

"If it looks in the next few months that a vaccine is proving difficult, that actually it has massive side effects or it's not effective or we're not actually building immunity in individuals, then I think it'll (Olympics) have to be delayed," Sridhar said.

Dr. Ali S. Khan, the dean of the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska, told The Associated Press in an email that even without a vaccine it may be possible to go ahead.

Fans sue MLB, teams over ticket money



LOS ANGELES
(AP) — A

pair of fans in New York sued Major League Baseball, Commissioner Rob Manfred and the 30 teams, asking for their money back for tickets and for certification of class-action status.

The lawsuit was filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles by Matthew Ajzenman, who said he bought a partial season plan for more than 20 Mets games; and Susan Terry-Bazer, who said she purchased six tickets

for a May 9 game at Yankee Stadium against Boston.

"Baseball fans are stuck with expensive and unusable tickets for unplayable games in the midst of this economic crisis," the lawsuit said. "Under the pretext of 'postponing' games, at the directive of MLB, teams and ticket merchants are refusing to issue refunds for games which are not going to be played as scheduled—if ever."

Ajzenman said his Mets plan cost \$1,730 and he made a first payment to the team of about \$317 last year. Terry-

Bazer said she paid \$926 to Ticketmaster and planned to take her grandson to the Red Sox-Yankees game.

Ticketmaster, Stubhub, Live Nation and Last Minute Transactions are among the defendants. The caption on the first page included Tampa Bay Devil Rays Ltd. —"Devil" was dropped from the team's nickname after the 2007 season.

"The defendants continue to retain enormous profits from tickets sold for the 2020 MLB season at the expense of fans' financial hardship," the suit said.

Fans asked for "full restitution, an accounting of all MLB tickets sold for the 2020 season (including season tickets, single game purchases, and public seat licenses), a declaratory judgment that defendants' conduct of continuing to sell tickets for the 2020 MLB regular season violates California law, as well as a dis-

gorgement of profits from tickets sold during the 2020 MLB season."

They allege violations of California's Consumer Legal Remedies Act and Unfair Competition Law and of civil conspiracy.

Opening day on March 26 was pushed back until mid-May at the earliest after a national emergency was declared due to the new coronavirus pandemic.

MLB said it is awaiting government and medical direction, and it does not know when the season can begin. The league and the players' union have discussed the possibility of playing at neutral sites or in empty ballparks, but no decisions have been made.

MLB, the Mets and Yankees did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Jeter forgoing salary

In Miami, Marlins CEO Der-

ek Jeter told team employees during a conference call Monday he is forgoing his salary during the coronavirus pandemic, a person familiar with the discussions told The Associated Press.

The person confirmed Jeter's comments to the AP on condition of anonymity because the Marlins have not commented publicly on the call.

The person said other members of the Marlins' executive team agreed to take pay cuts, while baseball operations personnel will continue to receive their full salaries through at least May 31. The person didn't specify the figures of the pay cuts.

Layoff, pay cuts

has made a move that allows teams to lay off or cut the pay of major and minor league managers, coaches, trainers and full-time scouts starting May 1.

Manfred has suspended

uniform employee contracts that cover about 9,000 people, including general managers on some teams. Manfred cited the inability to play games due to the national emergency caused by the new coronavirus pandemic.

"Our clubs rely heavily on revenue from tickets/concessions, broadcasting/media, licensing and sponsorships to pay salaries," Manfred wrote in an email Monday, a copy of which was obtained by The Associated Press. "In the absence of games, these revenue streams will be lost or substantially reduced, and clubs will not have sufficient funds to meet their financial obligations."

"The impact of the suspension of the UEC on your personal employment situation will be determined by your club," Manfred said.

Manfred's intention to suspend the contracts was first reported by The Athletic.

FLASHBACK

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run in the Big League division, as the Padres won their finals showdown, 7-1.

The Fielders, however, went on to take the division crown that eluded them in 2014 after another thrilling 6-5 finals win over the Braves the following year.

In 2016, neither the Fielders nor the Braves made it to the finals, which saw the Yankees beating the Islanders, 8-2, for the last Big League championship in the competition.

The Big League program, which is for players in the 16 to 18 age group, was discontinued by the Little League Headquarters in Williamsport after the 2016 World Series.

SIS

From Page 20

where the league held separate tournaments for boys and girls high school teams, SIS had a sweep. The Lady Geckos first clinched the division crown after beating Mt. Carmel School, 25-23, 25-22. SIS' boys team, on the other hand, met a familiar foe in GCA, and also took only two sets to win the finals, 25-16, 25-21.

In the 2014-2015 season, SIS made it to the finals anew in the boys and girls divisions and had a split. The Geckos took the men's crown against MCS, 25-22, 25-13. The Lady Knights then foiled SIS's bid for another sweep after prevailing in the women's finals, 25-15, 26-24.

The Geckos also reached the finals of the middle school division in the same 2014-2015 season, but lost to MCS, while the SIS-GCA rivalry returned the following season. Saiki's wards went on to take the middle school crown after outlasting GCA in three sets, 25-18, 13-25, 15-6.

"I really enjoyed watching my athletes play against GCA," said Saiki, the Northern Marianas Sports Association 2013 Coach of the Year.

It was also against GCA that SIS got its back-to-back title in the 2012 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Girls Volleyball League.

Seniors Zoe Jewell, Jian Joyner, Amber Roberts, and Lani Russel, juniors Celine Camacho, Saeri Oh, and Amy Xie, sophomore Kristle Obgac, and freshmen Jeane Bracken and Phalai Frink played for the repeat champions, who pulled off a



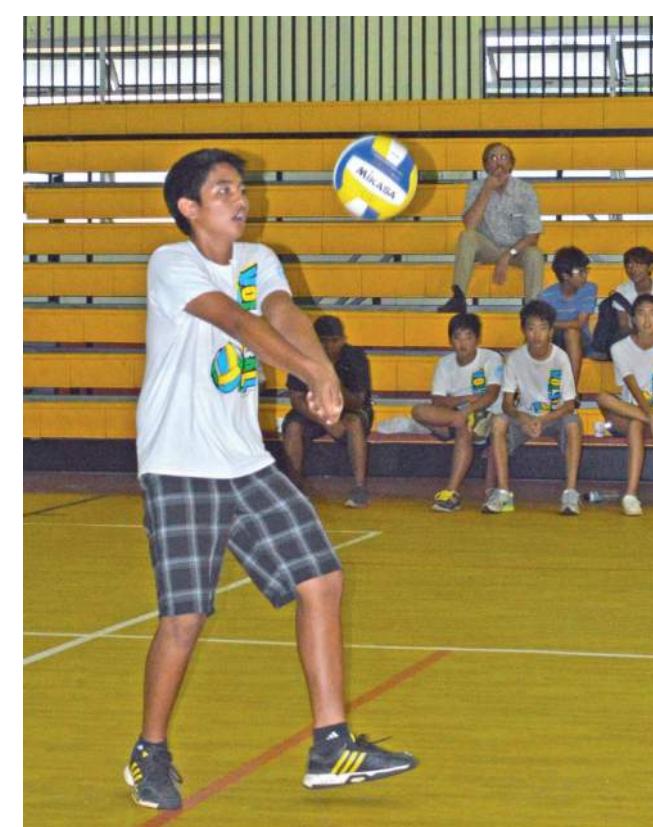
SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Saipan International School's Daniel Lim, right, scores against Grace Christian Academy blockers during their game in the 2015 season of the COPSSA volleyball league at the Whispering Palms School court.

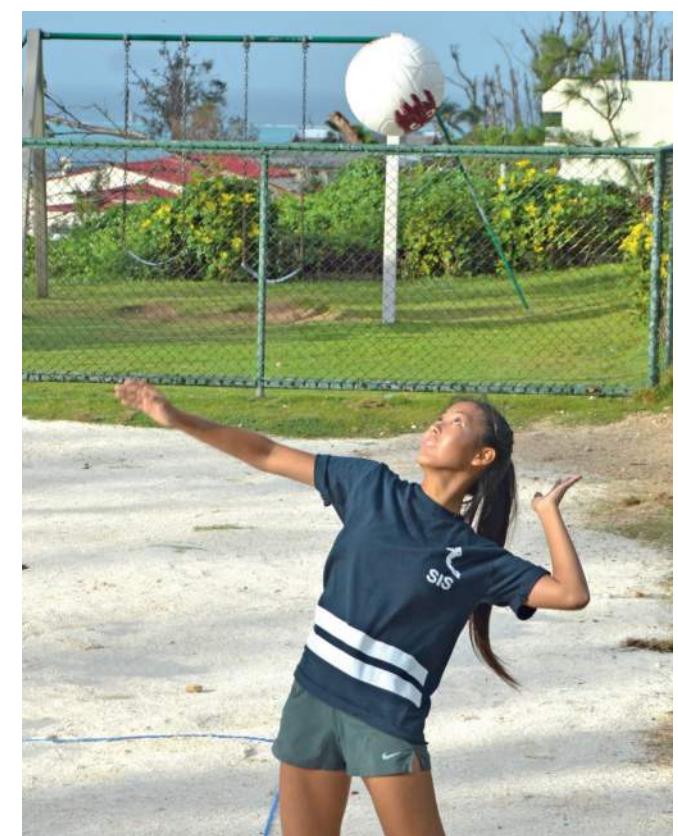
25-19, 25-27, 15-9 triumph in the 2012 finale. Emma McCullough-Stearns, Jessica Soll, Abby Hudkins, Shane Jones, and Svan Tured, on the other hand, were part of the first SIS champion team.

In the boys division, Saiki said SIS was nearly unstoppable when the Geckos had Andrew Johnson, Chris Cepeda, Chris Lam, Chris Park, and Clay McCullough-Stearns.

"Every year is special because you have a new group of students that are excited to learn or continue with the improvement of their skills. However, the best quality of volleyball was before Typhoon Soudelor came (2015)," the veteran coach said.



SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Saipan International School's Luther Lizama returns to Grace Christian Academy during their junior varsity division game in the 2013-2014 season of the COPSSA volleyball league at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Saipan International School's Julia Ishikawa serves against Grace Christian Academy during their girls high school division game in the 2015 season of the COPSSA volleyball league at the GCA court in Navy Hill.



SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Saipan International School coach Mili Saiki huddles with her players during a timeout in their game against Mount Carmel School in the 2019 season of the CCOPSSA volleyball league at the SIS court in As Lito.



Jordan 'axed'
McGrady-
Pippen swap

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NFL braces for
glitches with
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

SIS relishes rivalry with GCA



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the first Saipan International School girls champion team in the 2010-2011 Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization Girls Volleyball League pose for a group photo after beating rival Grace Christian Academy.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Ten years ago, Saipan International School ended Grace Christian Academy's six-year reign in the Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Volleyball League and that gave birth to the celebrated rivalry between the two teams.



"In our several championships with the middle and high school teams between 2010 and 2015, the best games are always against GCA. Both teams always bring the best of their abilities when we play each other," long-time SIS coach Mili Saiki said.

In the 2010-2011 season (co-ed high school), SIS lost the first set of the finale, 19-25, but then defending champion GCA missed closing out the title game, as the Geckos eked out a 25-23 victory in the second set. SIS went on to complete the come-from-behind championship win after taking the deciding third set, 15-11.

After their title showdown in the 2010-2011 competition, the Geckos and Eagles crossed paths in the finals in the next three seasons even after the league had separate tournaments for boys and girls and also in middle school.

The following year after seeing its winning streak snapped by SIS, GCA got its sweet revenge, as the Eagles this time prevailed in another three-set

finale, 26-24, 24-26, 15-8. Then in the 2012-2013 season, the Geckos and Eagles figured in another extended title duel with SIS reclaiming the high school crown after posting a 19-25, 25-22, 15-10 victory.

In the 2013-2014 seasons

See SIS on Page 19



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

In this Dec. 7, 2013 file photo, Saipan International School's Andrew Johnson, right, goes for a spike against Grace Christian Academy's Billy Hinson during their title game in the COPSSA volleyball league at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Flashback: Upset in Big League



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

In this April 22, 2014 file photo, Fielders players and coach Patrick Tenorio huddle before returning to the field for the bottom of the sixth inning of their playoff game against the Braves in the Big League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Six years ago, on April 22, the Fielders played a spoiler role in the highly anticipated finals showdown between the Braves and the Padres in the Big League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball.

The Fielders pulled off a 5-4 victory over the Braves to clinch the second and last finals berth. The Braves, before the heartbreaker, won the season pennant and were highly favored to march into the championship game against the Padres.

However, the Fielders got into the board first in the rubber match and preserved the shaky lead in the homestretch by getting the needed defensive stops.

A two-run single from Javon Borja plus Khobby

Kaipat's RBI single, Davin Ada's sacrifice fly, and Fermín Renguil's stolen base at the top of the fourth inning gave the Fielders a 5-0 lead. Ray Saralu's two-RBI single at the bottom of the fourth, Jeremy Atalig's RBI single in the fifth, and Frankie Norita's RBI triple in the sixth moved the Braves within one.

The Braves had a chance to tie the match in the seventh and last inning when Atalig hit his target and the ball landed in between first and second base, but Renguil picked it up and threw to first for the third out, ending the Braves' hopes for a season sweep.

Despite its gritty victory over the Braves, the Fielders failed to complete their title

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